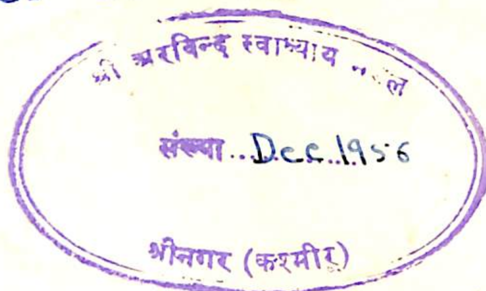
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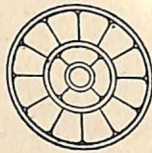


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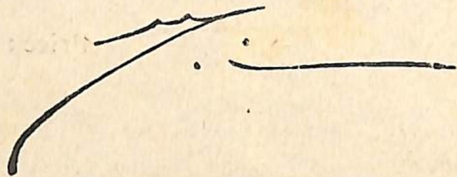
MOTHER INDIA

DECEMBER 5, 1956

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Lord, Thou hast willed, and I execute:
A new light breaks upon the earth,
A new world is born.
The things that were promised are fulfilled.



MOTHER INDIA

MONTHLY REVIEW OF CULTURE

Vol. VIII **No. 10 & 11**

"Great is Truth and it shall prevail"

CONTENTS

Students' Section

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(Based on the Mother's Talks to the Children of the Ashram)

THE SUPRAMENTAL MANIFESTATION AND WORLD-CHANGE

I HAVE been asked what difference the presence of the Supermind will make, in what way it will change the trend of events and how, since the Supramental manifestation, life has to be re-viewed. I am asked to give practical examples. I do not know what this means, but here is what I have seen in a somewhat mathematical mood. Although the mathematical language is quite foreign to me, still I may call it a mathematical mood, that is to say, a mathematical way of looking at the problem.

I believe you have done sufficient mathematics to know the complexity of combinations that arises when you take as your basis some elements out of a sum-total. To make it clearer I shall give you an example—but without using the terms you have been taught at school—from the letters of the alphabet. There are a certain number of letters. Now, if you want to calculate or know the number of combinations possible with these letters, taking all the letters together and organising them in as many ways as you can, you find, as you have been taught, that it is a fantastic figure.

Similarly, take the material world and come down to the most minute particle—you know scientists have arrived at things that are absolutely invisible and incalculable—and take this particle as your basis and the material world as the total and, further, imagine a Consciousness or a Will playing with these particles, making all sorts of possible combinations, never repeating the same combination. Of course, mathematically they say that the number of particles is finite and therefore the number of combinations also is finite, but this is purely theoretical, and theory does not interest us. Coming to the practical, even if you suppose that these combinations follow each other in such a manner and at such a speed that the change from one to another is hardly perceptible, it is clear that the time needed for the working out of all these combinations would be, apparently, infinite. That is to say, the number of combinations would be so immense that practically no end could be assigned to it.

Now imagine, as I have just asked you to do, that really there exists a Consciousness, a Will manifesting these combinations successively and

indefinitely, never repeating twice the same; then we must come to the conclusion that the universe is new at each moment of eternity and if the universe is new at each moment of eternity we are forced to admit there is nothing absolutely impossible; even further, what we call logical is not necessarily the true, and the logic or what might almost be called the fancy of the Creator has no limit to it.

Therefore, if for some reason (which it is difficult to express) a combination is not followed up by that which is nearest to it, but another one freely chosen by the Supreme Freedom, all our external certainties and all our surface logic would fall to the ground.

For, the problem is much more complicated than you think. It is not merely on one plane, in one domain, that is to say, what may be called the surface of things, that there is this almost infinite quantity of elements allowing ing combinations eternally new. There is more than that, there is what may be termed depth, that is to say, other dimensions.

Creation is the result not only of combinations on the surface but also of combinations in the depths of this surface : in other words, there are psychological factors. But I am looking from the purely mathematical standpoint; although I do not speak the mathematical language, it is still a mathematical conception. Here is then the problem.

Each time a new element is introduced into the sum-total of possible combinations, it is as it were a tearing of its limits; the introduction of something that effaces the past limits, brings in new possibilities into play, multiplies indefinitely the old possibilities. You had, for example, a world, as the ancient knowledge found it, with twelve layers of depth or successive dimensions. Now suppose in this world of twelve dimensions suddenly other dimensions were precipitated; all the old formulas would be changed immediately and the whole possibility according to the old unfolding would be, one cannot say increased, but supplemented by an almost infinite number of new possibilities, and that in such a manner that all the old logic would become illogical in the presence of the new logic.

I do not speak at all of what the human mind has built up with the universe, because that is a reduction to its own dimension. I speak of the fact as it is, of the sum-total of combinations that realise themselves successively according to an order and a choice which evidently escape wholly the human consciousness, a sum-total to which man has somewhat adapted himself and has at last succeeded in giving an expression that links itself to something tangible, after a great effort of study made through the centuries.

It is evident that the modern scientific perception is much nearer to something that corresponds to the universal Reality than the perceptions, say, of

the Stone Age; there is no shadow of a doubt about that. But even this will be completely transcended, surpassed and probably upset by the intrusion of something which was not in the universe and has not been studied so far.

This change, this sudden mutation in the universal elements will very certainly bring a kind of chaos in our perceptions, but out of it a new knowledge will arise. That, in a most general way, will be the result of the New Manifestation.

From a more restricted, external and limited point of view I shall speak now of things which are not within my own experience, but which I have heard being spoken about. It is said, for example, that one finds now a larger number of what they call child prodigies. Personally I have met none, so I cannot say what exactly is "prodigious" in these children. However, as the stories go, there is a new type or types of consciousness which appear surprising to the ordinary human consciousness. It is such examples, I suppose, that you would like to have in order to understand what is happening.

Indeed it is quite possible that things are happening now which people are not accustomed to meet with. But that is a question of interpretation. The only fact I am sure of is what I have just told you, that the quality, the quantity and the nature of the possible universal combinations are about to change to such an extent that it will stagger all those who deal with life. Let us wait and see.

I may add one word, a practical word, to what I have already said; it is an illustration of a detail, but it will be a kind of reply to some other questions put to me some time ago about the so-called laws of nature, causes and effects, inevitable consequences in the material world, more particularly from the point of view of health: we are told that if some precautions are not taken, if we do not eat as we should, if we do not follow certain rules, necessarily there will be consequences.

True. But if you look at the thing in the light of what I have told you—that there are not two universal combinations that are alike—then how can you establish laws and what is the absolute truth of such laws ?

There is no such truth. For, if you are logical, that is to say, with a little higher logic, how can you say that a thing repeats itself, since there are no two things, no two combinations, no two universal manifestations that are the same ? The "sameness" could be only an appearance, not a fact. The mind sets up rigid laws and, when it does that, you do not cut yourself off from the apparent surface existence, for the surface, in a very obliging manner, seems to satisfy these laws. But that is an appearance, and it does cut you off from the creative Power of the Spirit, cut you off from the true Power of Grace. You can understand that if, by your aspiration and your attitude, you

bring down a higher element, a new element—which now we may call the Supramental—into the existing combinations, you can all on a sudden change their nature and then all these so-called necessary and inexorable laws become absurdities. It is you, with your conception, your attitude, your acceptance of certain so-called principles, it is yourself who shut the door against the possibility of what you call miracles. They are not miracles, if you know how they come about, but evidently for your consciousness they have the look of the miraculous.

It is you who say with a logic that appears quite reasonable : "If I do this, necessarily this will happen", or "If I do not do this, this other thing will surely come about", and that is how you put, as it were, an iron curtain between yourself and the free action of the Grace.

How good would it be to imagine that the Supreme Consciousness, essentially free, that presides over the universal manifestation, is fanciful in its choice and that it makes things succeed each other, not according to a logic that is accessible to the human thought, but according to another kind of logic, the logic of the unforeseen !

Then there would be no limit to the possibilities, the unexpected and the wonderful. And one could hope for the most splendid, the most delightful things from this Will, sovereignly free, playing eternally with the elements, ceaselessly bringing forth a new world that would have logically nothing to do with the world that went before. Don't you think it would be the happiest of things ? We have had enough of the world as it is.

All this I am telling you so that each one of you may put as few barriers as possible against future possibilities. And that is my conclusion.

I do not know if I have made myself understood or not, but I suppose a day will come when you will know what I have wanted to say.

3-10-1956

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

CORRESPONDENCE WITH SRI AUROBINDO

INDIANS AND THE WRITING OF ENGLISH POETRY

27-2-1936

MYSELF : Let me tell you how an Englishman named T visiting our Ashram looked at our versification in English. His tongue has poured cold water over our enthusiasm. He had a heated discussion with D and said he could not understand at all why we Easterners should write poetry in English, deserting our own languages.

SRI AUROBINDO : Is his understanding of such immense importance? I might just as reasonably ask him why Westerners like him should go to practise an Eastern thing like spirituality or Yoga, leaving their own parliaments, factories and what not. But not being T in intelligence I don't ask such absurd questions.

MYSELF : He seems to know definitely that we shan't be able to handle English as an Englishman would.

SRI AUROBINDO : A T, like his father Tom, also his uncles Dick and Harry, must of course be omniscient.

MYSELF : He says : "Suppose an Englishman were to write in Bengali !"

SRI AUROBINDO : It would depend on the Englishman and how he did it.

MYSELF : D argued : "The *Gitanjali* of Tagore was appreciated by many English poets. Conrad's prose ranks as high as any great English writer's. Sarojini Naidu and some others were praised by Gosse, Binyon and de la Mare."

SRI AUROBINDO : Add Santayana whose prose is better than most Englishmen's.

MYSELF : T rejoined : "The interests of those praisers were extra-literary. Show the works of the Indians to people like Eliot and see." God knows what he means.

SRI AUROBINDO : I don't think God knows. What the blazes does all this nonsense mean ?... People like Binyon and de la Mare have no literary merit or literary perception and Eliot has ? Eliot is a theorist, a man who builds his poetry according to rule. God save us from such people and their opinions[1].

MYSELF : As for Tagore, his work is said to have been appreciated because it was derivative, a rendering from another language.

SRI AUROBINDO : What difference does that make ? The English Bible is a translation, but it ranks among the finest pieces of literature in the world.

MYSELF : As for Conard, T says he is a Westerner, and surely there is a bigger difference in tradition, expression, feeling between an Easterner and an Englishman than between a Westerner and a Westerner.

SRI AUROBINDO : In other words, any Western tradition, expression, feeling—even Polish or Russian—can be legitimately expressed in English, however un-English it may be, but an Eastern spirit, tradition or temper cannot? He differs from Gosse who told Sarojini Naidu that she must write Indian poems in English—poems with an Indian tradition, feeling, way of expression, not reproduce the English mind and turn, if she wanted to do something great and original as a poet in the English tongue.

MYSELF : T objects to our making even an experiment.

SRI AUROBINDO : How terrible ! Then of course everybody must stop at once. I too must not presume to write in English—for I have an Indian mind and spirit and am that dreadful Indian thing, a Yogi.

MYSELF : Can we say that he is absolutely wrong ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Nobody ever is absolutely wrong. There is an infinitesimal atom of truth even in the most lunatic proposition ever made.

MYSELF : We Indians can't enter into the subtleties of a foreign tongue; so we run the risk of writing unEnglish English.

[1] Editor's Note:—Sri Aurobindo's whole estimate of Eliot is naturally not summed up in a remark made in 1936. Although this remark touches on a point which he evidently thought important in relation to Eliot, he could say about some passages read out to him at a later date: "This is poetry." About some others he said, "The substance is good but there's no poetry." He also appreciated certain pieces of criticism by Eliot, apropos which he remarked that Eliot was better as a critic than as a poet.

SRI AUROBINDO : Who is this "we"? Many Indians write better English than many educated Englishmen.

MYSELF : I believe he would waive his objection in your case.

SRI AUROBINDO : How graciously kind of him ! After all perhaps I can continue to write in English. Only poor Amal will have to stop. He can't write a line after the cold water of T's tongue.

MYSELF : I don't know that any Englishman could write *pucca* Bengali. It would sound and "sense" unBengali Bengali.

SRI AUROBINDO : It would if he had not thoroughly mastered the Bengali tongue. It is true that few Englishmen have the Indian's linguistic turn, plasticity and ability.

MYSELF : Of course if you say that our aim is not success or Shelleyan heights, then it is a different matter.

SRI AUROBINDO : Shelleyan heights are regarded, I believe, by Eliot as very low things or at least a very bad eminence.

MYSELF : But even for expressing spirituality, must we not try to make the vehicle as perfect as possible ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Who said not except the unparalleled T ?

MYSELF : Now, is there any chance for it ? T, an Englishman, says "None". And you ?

SRI AUROBINDO : How can my opinion have any value against that of an Englishman—especially when that Englishman calls himself T ?

As I said at the beginning I have no interest in T's opinions and set no value by them. Even the awful fact of his being an Englishman does not terrify me. Strange, isn't it ? I have seen some lucubrations of his meant to be spiritual or Yogic and they are the most horrible pretentious inflated circumlocutionary bombastic would-be-abysmally-profound language that I have seen. For a man who talks of English style, tradition, expression, feeling, idiom it was the worst production and most unEnglish possible. Few Indians could have beaten it. And the meaning nil. Also he is the gentleman who finds that there is "very little spirituality" in India. So hat's off to T (even though we have no hats), and for the rest silence.

As for the question itself, I put forward four reasons why the experiment could be made. 1) The expression of spirituality in the English tongue is needed and no one can give the real stuff like Easterners and especially Indians. 2) We are entering an age when the stiff barriers of insular and national mentality are breaking down (Hitler notwithstanding), the nations are being drawn into a common universality with whatever differences, and in the new age there is no reason why the English should not admit the expression of other minds than the English in their tongue. 3) For ordinary minds it may be difficult to get over the barrier of a foreign tongue but extraordinary minds, Conarad etc., can do it. 4) In this case the experiment is to see whether what extraordinary minds can do cannot be done by Yoga. *Sufficit*—or, as R eloquently puts it, "'Nuff said".

NIRODBARAN

THE SECRET OF THE VEDA

SRI AUROBINDO

CHAPTER XXII

THE CONQUEST OVER THE DASYUS

THE Dasyus stand in opposition to both the Aryan gods and the Aryan seers. The Gods are born from Aditi in the Supreme Truth of things, the Dasyus or Danavas from Diti in the nether darkness; they are the Lords of Light and the Lords of Night fronting each other across the triple world of earth, heaven and mid-air, body, mind and the connecting breath of life. Sarama in X.108, descends from the supreme realm, *parākāt*; she has to cross the waters of the *rasā*, she meets the night which gives place to her for fear of her overleaping it, *atiṣkado bhiyasā*; she arrives at the home of the Dasyus, *dasyor oko na sadanam*, which they themselves describe as the *reku* padam *alakam*, the world of falsehood beyond the bound of things. The supreme world also surpasses the bound of things by exceeding or transcending it; it is *reku padam*, but *satyam* not *alakam*, the world of the Truth, not the world of the falsehood. The latter is the darkness without knowledge, *tamo avayunam tatanvat*; Indra, when his largeness exceeds (*ririce*) heaven and earth and mid-world, creates for the Aryan the opposite world of truth and knowledge, *vayunavat*, which exceeds these three domains and is therefore *reku padam*. This darkness, this lower world of Night and the Inconscient in the formed existence of things symbolised in the image of the mountain which rises from the bowels of earth to the back of heaven, is represented by the secret cave at the base of the hill, the cave of the darkness.

But the cave is only the home of the Panis, their field of action is earth and heaven and the mid-world. They are the sons of the Inconscience, but themselves are not precisely inconscient in their action; they have forms of apparent knowledge, *māyāḥ*, but these are forms of ignorance the truth of which is concealed in the darkness of the inconscient and their surface or front is falsehood, not truth. For the world as we see it has come out of the darkness concealed in darkness, the deep and abysmal flood that covered all things, the inconscient ocean, *apraketam salilam* (X. 129-3); in that non-existence the seers have found by desire in the heart and thought in the mind that which builds up the true existence. This non-existence of the truth of things, *asat*, is the first aspect of them that emerges from the inconscient ocean; and its great darkness

is the Vedic Night, *rātrīm jagato niveśanīm* (I. 35-1), which holds the world and all its unrevealed potentialities in her obscure bosom. Night extends her realm over this triple world of ours and out of her in heaven, in the mental being, Dawn is born who delivers the Sun out of the darkness where it was lying concealed and eclipsed and creates the vision of the supreme Day in the non-existence, in the Night, *asati praketuḥ* (I. 124-11). It is therefore in these three realms that the battle between the Lords of Light and the Lords of the Ignorance proceeds through its continual vicissitudes.

The word *paṇi* means dealer, trafficker, from *paṇ* (also *pan*,[1] cf. Tamil *pan*, Greek *ponos*, labour) and we may perhaps regard the Panis as the powers that preside over those ordinary unillumined sense-activities of life whose immediate root is in the dark subconscient physical being and not in the divine mind. The whole struggle of man is to replace this action by the luminous working of mind and life which comes from above through the mental existence. Whoever thus aspires, labours, battles, travels, ascends the hill of being is the Aryan (*ārya*, *arya*, *ari* with the various senses, to toil, to fight, to climb or rise, to travel, to prepare the sacrifice); for the work of the Aryan is a sacrifice which is at once a battle and an ascent and a journey, a battle against the powers of darkness, an ascent to the highest peaks of the mountain beyond earth and heaven into Swar, a journey to the other shore of the rivers and the ocean into the farthest Infinity of things. The Aryan has the will to the work, he is the doer of the work (*kāru*, *kiri*, etc.), the gods who put their force into his work are *sukratu*, perfect in power for the sacrifice; the Dasyu or Pani is the opposite of both, he is *akratu*. The Aryan is the sacrificer, *yajamāna*, *yajyu*; the gods who receive, uphold, impel his sacrifice are *yajata*, *yajatra*, powers of the sacrifice; the Dasyu is the opposite of both, he is *ayajyu*. The Aryan in the sacrifice finds the divine word, *gīḥ*, *mantra*, *brahma*, *uktha*, he is the *brahmā* or singer of the word; the gods delight in and uphold the word, *gīrvāhaṣaḥ*, *girvaṇasaḥ*, the Dasyus are haters and destroyers of the Word, *brahmadvisah*, spoilers of speech, *mṛdhravacasaḥ*. They have no force of the divine breath or no mouth to speak it, they are *aṇasaḥ*; and they have no power to think and mentalise the word and the truth it contains, they are *amanyamānāḥ* : but the Aryans are the thinkers of the word, *manyamānāḥ*, holders of the thought, the thought-mind and the seer-knowledge, *dhīra*, *manīṣī*, *kavi*; the gods are also the supreme thinkers of the Thought, *prathamo monotā dhiyaḥ*, *kavayaḥ*. The Aryans are desirers of the godheads, *devayuḥ*, *uśijaḥ*; they seek to increase their own being

[1] Sayana takes *pan* in Veda—to praise, but in one place he admits the sense of *vyavahāra*, dealing. Action seems to me to be its sense in most passages. From *paṇ* in the sense of action we have the earlier names of the organs of action, *pāṇi*, hand, foot, or hoof, Lat. *penis*, cf. also *pāyu*.

and the godheads in them by the sacrifice, the word, the thought; the Dasyus are god-haters *devadviṣaḥ*, obstructors of the godhead, *devanidaḥ*, who desire no increase, *avṛdhaḥ*. The gods lavish wealth on the Aryan, the Aryan gives his wealth to the gods; the Dasyu withholds his wealth from the Aryan until it is taken from him by force, and does not press out the immortal Soma-wine for the deities who seek its rapture in man; although he is *revān*, although his cave is packed with cows and horses and treasures, *gobhir aśvebhir vasubhir nyṛṣṭaḥ* (X.108-7), still he is *arādhas*, because his wealth gives no prosperity or felicity to man or himself,—the Pani is the miser of existence. And in the struggle between the Aryan and the Dasyu he seeks always to plunder and destroy, to steal the luminous cows of the latter and hide them again in the darkness of the cave. "Slay the devourer, the Pani; for he is the wolf (the tearer, *vṛkaḥ*)" (VI.51-14).

It is evident that these descriptions could easily be applied to human enemies who hate the cult and the gods of the Aryan, but we shall see that such an interpretation is entirely impossible because in the hymn I. 33, in which these distinctions are most clearly drawn and the battle of Indra and his human allies with the Dasyus most elaborately described, these Dasyus, Panis and Vritras, cannot possibly be human fighters, tribes or robbers. In this hymn of Hiranyastupa Angirasa the first ten verses clearly refer to the battle for the Cows and therefore to the Panis. "Come, let us go seeking the cows to Indra; for it is he that increases the thought in us; invincible is he and complete are his felicities, he releases for us (separates from the darkness) the supreme knowledge-vision of the luminous cows, *gavām ketam param āvarjate naḥ*. I fly to the unassailable giver of riches like a bird to its beloved nest, bowing down to Indra with the supreme words of light, to him to whom his affirmers must call in their journey. He comes with all his armies and has fastened firmly his quivers; he is the fighter (the Aryan) who brings the cows to whomsoever he desires. O Indra who hast increased (by our word), hold not back for thyself thy much delight, become not in us the Pani, *coṣkuyamāna bhāri vāmam mā paṇir bhūr asmad adhi pravṛddha*." The last phrase is a striking one and in the current interpretation its real force is avoided by rendering "do not become a miser with regard to us." But this is to ignore the fact that the Panis are the withholders of the wealth who keep it for themselves and give it neither to god nor man. The sense obviously is "Having thy much wealth of the delight, do not be a Pani, one who holds his possessions only for himself and keeps them from man; do not hold the delight away from us in thy superconscient as the Panis do in their subconscient secrecy."

Then the hymn describes the Pani, the Dasyu and Indra's battle with him for the possession of earth and heaven. "Nay, thou slayest with thy weapon

the wealthy Dasyu, ranging alone with thy powers that serve thee, O Indra; they on thy bow (the powers as arrows) sped diversely in all directions and they who keep possession and sacrifice not went unto their death. Their heads were scattered far from them, they who do not sacrifice yet strove with the sacrificers, when, O lord of the shining steeds, O strong stander in heaven, thou didst cast out from Heaven and Earth those who observe not the law of thy working (*avratān*). They fought against the army of the blameless one; the Navagwas set him on his march; like bullocks who fight against the bull they were cast out, they came to know what was Indra and fled from him down the slopes. O Indra, thou foughtest them who laughed and wept on the other side of the mid-world (*rajasaḥ pāre, i.e.* on the borders of heaven); thou didst burn down the Dasyu out of heaven from on high, thou didst foster the expression of him who affirms thee and gives the Soma. Making the circle of the earth, they shone in the light of the golden gem (an image for the Sun); but for all their rushing they could not pass beyond Indra, for he set spies all around by the Sun. When thou possessedst earth and heaven all around with thy vastness; O Indra, by the speakers of the word (*brahmabhir*) thou didst cast out the Dasyu, attacking those who can think not (the Truth) by those who think, *amanyamānān abhi manyamānaiḥ*. They attained not to the end of heaven and earth; Indra, the bull, made the lightning his helper, by the Light he milked the shining cows out of the darkness."

The battle takes place not on earth but on the other shore of the Antariksha, the Dasyus are driven out of heaven by the flames of the thunderbolt, they circle round the earth and are cast out of both heaven and earth; for they can find no place in either heaven or earth, all being now full of the greatness of Indra, nor can conceal themselves anywhere from his lightnings because the Sun with its rays gives him spies whom he sets all round and in the brightness of those rays the Panis are discovered. This can be no description of an earthly battle between Aryan and Dravidian tribes; neither can the lightning be the physical lightning since that has nothing to do with the destruction of the powers of Night and the milking of the cows of the Dawn out of the darkness. It is clear then that these non-sacrificers, these haters of the word who are incompetent even to think it are not any human enemies of the Aryan cult. They are the powers that strive for possession of heaven and earth in man himself; they are demons and not Dravidians.

It is noteworthy that they strive, but fail to attain the "limit of earth and heaven"; we may suppose that these powers seek without the word or the sacrifice to attain to the higher world beyond earth and heaven which can be conquered only by the word and the sacrifice. They seek to possess the Truth under the law of the Ignorance; but they are unable to attain to the limit of

earth or heaven; only Indra and the Gods can so exceed the formula of mind, life and body after filling all three with their greatness. Sarama (X.108-6) seems to hint at this ambition of the Panis; "May your words be unable to attain, may your embodiments be evil and inauspicious; may you not violate the path to travel upon it; may Brihaspati not give you happiness of the two worlds (divine and human)." The Panis indeed offer insolently to be friendly with Indra if he will stay in their cave and be the keeper of their cows, to which Sarama answers that Indra is the overcomer of all and cannot be himself overcome and oppressed, and again they offer brotherhood to Sarama if she will dwell with them and not return to the far world whence she has come by the force of the gods against all obstacles, *prabādhita sahasā daivyena*. Sarama replies, "I know not brotherhood and sisterhood, Indra knows and the dread Angirasas; desiring the Cows they protected me so that I came; depart hence, O Panis, to a better place. Depart hence, O Panis, to a better place, let the Cows ye confine go upward by the Truth, the hidden Cows whom Brihaspati finds and Soma and the pressing-stones and the illumined seers."

We have the idea also of a voluntary yielding up of their store by the Panis in VI. 53, a hymn addressed to the Sun as the Increaser Pushan. "O Pushan, Lord of the Path, we yoke thee like a chariot for the winning of the plenitude, for the Thought...O shining Pushan, impel to giving the Pani, even him who giveth not; soften the mind even of the Pani. Distinguish the paths that lead to the winning of the plenitude, slay the aggressors, let our thoughts be perfected. Smite the hearts of the Panis with thy goad, O seer; so make them subject to us. Smite them, O Pushan, with thy goad and desire in the heart of the Pani our delight; so make him subject to us....Thy goad thou bearest that impels the wordto rise, O shining seer, with that write thy line on the hearts of all and sever them, (so make them subject to us). Thy goad of which thy ray is the point and which perfects the herds (of thought-vision, *paśusādhanīm*, cf. *sādhantām dhiyaḥ* in verse 4), the delight of that we desire. Create for us the thought that wins the cow, that wins the horse, that wins the plenitude of the wealth."

If we are right in our interpretation of this symbol of the Panis, these ideas are sufficiently intelligible without depriving the word of its ordinary sense, as does Sayana, and making it mean only a miserly, greedy human being whom the hunger-stricken poet is thus piteously importuning the Sun-God to turn to softness and charity. The Vedic idea was that the subconscient darkness and the ordinary life of ignorance held concealed in it all that belongs to the divine life and that these secret riches must be recovered first by destroying the impenitent powers of ignorance and then by possessing the lower life subjected to the higher. Of Indra it has been said, as we have seen, that he either

slays or conquers the Dasyu and transfers his wealth to the Aryan. So also Sarama refuses peace with alliance to the Panis, but suggests their submission to the gods and the Aryans by the surrender and ascent of the imprisoned cows and their own departure from the darkness to a better place, *ā varīyaḥ* (X. 108-9,10). And it is by the strenuous touch of the goad of the luminous seer, Pushan, lord of the Truth, the goad that drives open the closed heart and makes the sacred word to arise from its depths, it is by this luminous-pointed goad which perfects the radiant cows, accomplishes the luminous thoughts, that the conversion of the Pani is effected; then the Truth-god in his darkened heart also desires that which the Aryan desires. Therefore by this penetrating action of the Light and the Truth the powers of the ordinary ignorant sense-activity become subject to the Aryan.

But, normally, they are his enemies, not *dāsa* in the sense of submission and service (*dāsa*, servant, from *das* the work), but in the sense of destruction and injury (*dāsa*, *dasyu*, an enemy, plunderer, from *das* to divide, hurt, injure). The Pani is the robber who snatches away the cows of light, the horses of the swiftness and the treasures of the divine plenitude, he is the wolf, the eater, *atri*, *vṛka*; he is the obstructor, *nid*, and spoiler of the word. He is the enemy, the thief, the false or evil thinker who makes difficult the Path by his robberies and obstructions; "Cast away utterly far from us the enemy, the thief, the crooked one who places falsely the thought; O master of existence, make our path easy to travel. Slay the Pani, for he is the wolf that devours" (VI. 51-13,14). His rising to the attack must be checked by the gods. "This god (Soma) in his birth with Indra for helper held back by force the Pani" (VI. 44-22), and won Swar and the sun and all the riches. The Panis have to be slain or routed so that their riches may be ravished from them and devoted to the higher life. "Thou who didst sever the Pani in his continuous ranks, thine are these strong givings, O Saraswati. O Saraswati, crush the obstructors of the gods" (VI. 61-1,3). "O Agni and Soma, then was your strength awakened when you robbed the Pani of the cows and found the one Light for many" (I. 93-4).

When the gods awake in the Dawn for the sacrifice, the Panis must not awake also to interfere with its successful progress; let them sleep in their cavern darkness. "O Dawn, queen of the plenitudes, awaken those who fill us (the gods), but let the Panis sleep unawakening. Richly dawn for the lords of the plenitude, O queen of the plenitude, richly for him who affirms thee, O Dawn that art Truth. Young she shines out before us, she has created her host of the ruddy cows; in the non-existent, vision has dawned out wide" (I. 124-10,11). Or again in IV. 51-1,2,3, "Lo, in front of us that supreme light full of the knowledge has arisen out of the darkness; daughters of heaven shining wide, the Dawns have created the path for the human being. The Dawns stand

in front of us like pillars in the sacrifices; breaking out pure and purifying they have opened the doors of the pen, the darkness. Breaking forth today the dawns awaken to knowledge the enjoyers for the giving of the rich felicity; within where there is no play of light let the Panis sleep unwaking in the heart of the darkness." Into this nether darkness they have to be cast down from the higher planes while the Dawns imprisoned by them in that night have to be lifted to the highest planes. "Panis who make the knot of the crookedness, who have not the will to works, spoilers of speech, who have not faith, who increase not, who do not sacrifice, them has Agni driven farther and farther; supreme, he has made them nethermost who will not sacrifice. And (the Cows, the Dawns) who rejoiced in the nether darkness, by his power he has made to move to the highest....He has broken down by his blows the walls that limit, he has given the Dawns to be possessed by the Aryan", *aryapatnīr uṣasaś cakāra* (VII. 6-3,4,5). The Rivers and Dawns when in the possession of Vritra or Vala are described as *dāsapatnīḥ*; by the action of the gods they become *aryapatnīḥ*, they become the helpmates of the Aryan.

The lords of the ignorance have to be slain or enslaved to the Truth and its seekers, but their wealth is indispensable to the human fulfilment; it is as if "on the most wealth-abounding head of the Panis" (VI. 45-31) that Indra takes his stand, *paṇīnam varṣiṣṭhe mūrdhan asthāt*; be becomes himself the Cow of Light and the Horse of Swiftness and lavishes an ever-increasing thousandfold wealth. The fullness of that luminous wealth of the Panis and its ascent heavenward is, as we know already, the Path and the birth of the Immortality. "The Angirasas held the supreme manifestation (of the Truth), they who had lit the fire, by perfect accomplishment of the work; they gained the whole enjoyment of the Pani, its herds of the cows and the horses. Atharvan first formed the Path, thereafter Surya was born as the protector of the Law and the Blissful One, *tataḥ sūryo vratapā vena ājani*. Ushanas Kavya drove upward the Cows. With them may we win by the sacrifice the immortality that is born as a child to the Lord of the Law," *yamasya jātam amṛtam yajāmahe* (I. 83,4,5). Angirasa is the Rishi who represents the Seer-Will, Atharvan is the Rishi of the journeying on the Path, Ushanas Kavya is the Rishi of the heavenward desire that is born from the seer-knowledge. The Angirasas win the wealth of illuminations and powers of the Truth concealed behind the lower life and its crookedness; Atharvan forms in their strength the Path and Surya the Lord of Light is then born as the guardian of the divine Law and the Yama-power; Ushanas drives the herded illuminations of our thought up that path of the Truth to the Bliss which Surya possesses; so is born from the law of the Truth the immortality to which the Aryan soul by its sacrifice aspires.

THE UNPUBLISHED WRITINGS OF ARJAVA
(J. A. CHADWICK)

WITH SRI AUROBINDO'S COMMENTS

(*Series* 5)

PHINTIAS TO DAMON

I. SYRACUSE

THAT magic ring of mountains and blue sea
Converging inward, gleaming near at hand
In perfect feature, in the unmatched form
Of naked marble and bronze divinity,—
Of all that was wrought and shaped in this fair land
The grace within your mind becomes the norm,
Your strength and poise of limb have rendered warm
The heart that pondered, true the eye that scanned,
Damon ; for since our level eyes have met
Some woven joy has bound my sheaf of days,
A shadowless air has lapped me round with peace,
No shadowy lusts of years have power to fret
Immortal compact sired by mortal gaze.

15-2-1935

Sri Aurobindo's Comment:[1]

"I think you have expressed it[1] well enough in the sestet which is very fine —at any rate the union of wide serenity and living feeling ; while the octet also prepares very beautifully the thought of the sestet."

[1] The poet's question to which this comment is an answer cannot be traced (Editor).

II. WARRIOR

The ancient lore of our great brotherhood,
How growth is bred by cycles of the years,
That music builds the wheelings of the spheres,
On woof of Number all is understood
And in that Oneness lies our furthest good,—
So through the outward twain one unit peers,
Our lives are sides for one keen edge that shears
Across the Many, that cleaves the phantom wood
Of sense-bound forms, unstable, composite :
O may the stuff of adamantine steel
Be fashioned as a blade whereof we feel
Ourselves the sides that blend so none may sever,—
One sword to thrust the dimness from the Light,
Edged gleam of trust invincible for ever.

16-2-1935

Sri Aurobindo's Comment :

"A very fine sonnet, the thought very well developed in language of considerable felicity."

INWARDNESS

A lonely headland in a moonlit sea:
Bushes that barely rise above the knee ;
Not one bough held seaward by the stunted tree.

The sea sucked in the sun of hopes new-planned.
Nightlong the harsh wind harasses the land.
Grimly the welkin dawn-greys to the cold of an iron band.

Gleams there an altar white within a shrine,
In some green dell where the yellow vetchlings twine
And a small sweet rose tangs the air with a kenning of things benign ?

This found, and hand made strong, heart gay, thought true,
Lightly I'd strew the milkwort, white, rose-red and blue—
Friendwise I'd offer heart, hand, and every thought to you.

20-4-1935

Sri Aurobindo's Comment:

"The poem is very sucecessful—original in expression and form and suggestive symbol. Very well built."

SOUL, THE FORM OF A BODY

Reaching the garbage pit of a solar system,
The President viewed the man-infested planet;
Man with corrosion's all-putrefying warscape
Unbuilds earth to mate his formlessness.

Author's Note: "The President" ("Of the Immortals" understood—Hardy's *Tess*)

Sri Aurobindo's Comment:

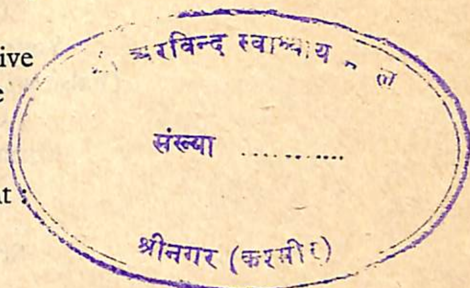
"It is well done; there is originality in the idea and the form."

AT THE TIME OF THE NEW MOON TO ONE WHO IS LOVED

If at joy's noon you are the sun,
A sapphire-girded flame,
Each veering crescent and half moon
Turns lightward memory's aim
When noon is done.

If one star fills the daybright thought,
The myriad glitter-play
Of evening spreads in a thousand rills
For the delta of dreams that ray
Which you have brought.

If the new moon leave my barren sky
Emptied of thoughts of you,
Behind this bleakening world receive
From a shrine the votive blue
Petals of ecstasy.



Sri Aurobindo's Comment :

"Very beautiful."

Wide ocean, quivering of wings,
The first star-glow in a quiet sky
Bequeathed by sun to planetary kings
And waywodes of an untold galaxy.

Sri Aurobindo's Comment :

(The question was asked : "Do the above lines appear to have any authenticity ? I could write nothing at all last night, and this is all I could do this evening.")

"They make a very fine beginning for a poem; especially the first two make up by their images a suggestive atmosphere."

TO RICHARD ON HIS GENIUS

You whisper to the air
Such secret things
As are known to a Shape bent low,
Seeking to fan your hair
With puissant wings
(Stay one with these who know !)

If outward beauty dyes
Your look and thews,
Thereby be tuned the more
To living Shapes who rise
In dreamlike hues,—
Unpillaged towers that soar.

No further sickness ails
Our hearts' life when
Your Power has wrought that fane
(False weights and crooked scales
Of postwar men
Mismeasure all—in vain).

9-2-1938

Sri Aurobindo's Comment :

Very fine, especially the first two stanzas. (Perhaps the "postwar men" are not quite in tone with the rest of the poem.)

AFTER A GLIMPSE OF AN ENGLISH FAMILY

To know there are green leaves
Of tree and grass
Where the heart no longer grieves
At the bitter farce
Of social ordered blindness,
Sincere disdain
(Listless from lack of kindness,
And fruitless pain).

To know sweet water fails not
Or shade at noon,
And insolence avails not
With a blatant tune,
And that no treacherous wood
Is false to feeling,—
Words, said or understood,
Wing rife with healing.

11-2-1938

Sri Aurobindo's Comment :

"Some lines are beautiful. The rest can stand as poetry but is not up to your usual level."

THE SHOOTING STAR

Falling jewel from the sky,
Softly through the darkness hie :
Art thou amethyst or pearl ?
Turquoise ? Opal ? Or the swirl
In some living diamond's heart
    Most revealing,
    Least concealing
That flaming hue-land where thou art ?

Sri Aurobindo's Comment :

"The lines are good, especially the last five—the second line of the stanza might perhaps be replaced by something more energetic knitting better together the opening and what follows."

AGLAIE WITH EUPHROSYNE ND THALI

Three were the Nymphs guarding forest-bred
    Blossomed boughs—the goddesses of Spring
Whose laughter, green-wakening trancèd head,
    Surged in leaf and fluttering of wing.

Aglaie, myrtle-crowned, was there,
    Linking hands with sister Charites :
And fragrance is widening through the air,
    Born where roses wavered in the breeze.

Sri Aurobindo's Comment :

(Q. "In this exercise are the initial dactyls managed properly ?)

"Yes, they are quite right and replace the amphibrach without a hitch—no disturbance of the rhythm."

(Q. "And in l. 3 there is a 'glide Ionic majore', I suppose ?")

"Yes."

IMPRESSIONS OF THE SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM

Mr. B. Sanjiva Rao, I.E.S. (retd.) is well-known as one of the foremost educationists of the country. For long he was associated with Dr. Annie Besant both in the Home Rule Movement and her educational activities in Banares. At present he is guiding the development of the Rajghat School and the Vasanta College in the same city.

These are extracts from a letter received from him after a recent visit to the Sri Aurobindo International University Centre.

THIS is not a critical appreciation of the Mother's educational work in the Ashram. It would be an impertinence on my part to pass judgment on the achievement of one who is undoubtedly an organising genius of the highest quality and order. I would like to state simply the manner of my approach to your work in Pondicherry and my impressions of that work.

All that I had heard and read about the Ashram made me realise that Sri Aurobindo and the Mother were preparing the ground for the reception and training of a new type of humanity. The work in the Ashram educational centre is surely far more than teaching. It is very definitely the development of human personality at all the levels—physical, vital, mental, spiritual.

In our work in Banares, although we were fully aware of what was needed to be done, yet the immediate task of training the personnel for social and political work did not leave us time or energy for the education of the psyche. I went to Pondicherry to discover what was being attempted there and how the Mother was organising the educational work. This was my intention and my method of approach.

The Ashram to me is an integral whole. It is an educational centre for both young and old. The young grow in an environment that is being slowly built up by the old. The pupils of the School grow by learning, the teachers by teaching, the workers through their work. The common link is a dedication to the service of the Divine by a total, integral surrender to the Divine Will, the surrender of the physical, the vital and the mental.

In the course of a four or five days' stay, I was able to contact though very partially the different cross-sections of the Ashram. Although I did contact the older workers, my main interest was in the younger workers. In the course of a very brief interview I was able to sense a keenness of interest and

aspiration that was truly inspiring. I deliberately asked them what their plans were for the future. Although they had a magnificent opportunity of equipping themselves for the work, yet they might find that the world outside held no promise of a career. But they seemed completely indifferent to their future. They had a wonderful faith in the Mother who was truly their Providence. Naturally the people whom I met would be a small section of the younger population. But there is no doubt that they are the hope of the future.

The Mother is the Ashram at present. Young and old are bound to her by an astonishing faith in her judgment, her spiritual insight. She provides for them, her decisions in all matters are never questioned. She solves all individual and collective problems—whether it is illness, or a maladjustment, or unsatisfactory work, the matter is referred to the Mother who seems to be able to put things right. The workers never grumble, however tedious the work assigned to them. Unquestioning acceptance of the Mother's decisions is the law that governs all human relationships. There is a feeling that the Mother knows by a secret insight everything that is happening in the Ashram and so no one would dream of breaking the law of strict obedience to the will of the Mother. She is the centre of a sphere of influence who holds every member of the Ashram by an invisible cord of devotion and spontaneous homage to a supreme Wisdom.

It is only fair to add that there does not seem to be much relationship among the members of the Ashram. They have come there out of devotion to Sri Aurobindo and his colleague and disciple. Their relationship to each other derives entirely from their loyalty to their Leader. I wonder if they discuss freely among themselves. The final authority is the Mother.

Such implicit faith and trust naturally makes for organisational efficiency. The Ashram is a marvellous experiment in organisation. People from many countries speaking different languages, belonging to different cultural strata, all seem to be held together by an unusual power of attraction that is literally a fascination—and so the work of the Ashram goes on smoothly, swiftly and silently with frictionless ease. The evening Darshan affords brief opportunities for applying the oil that removes the inevitable frictions of daily life—whether it is the small problem of a boy or girl who skips attendance or work, or more serious problems of the mind and heart, a few words from the Mother seem to be capable of easing the tension. The Mother is credited with supernormal powers—what she has achieved justifies the claim to an extraordinary genius and wisdom that sweetly ordereth all things.

It is with some awe that I watched the lonely figure of a little woman of advanced years who singly bears the weight of a vast burden of responsibility. The financial burden alone is something colossal. The burden of solving the

psychological problem of a community of nearly a thousand members of the Ashram would demand a superhuman wisdom and insight.

To me, as I said before, the Aurobindo Ashram is an educational centre. The School and the University Centre form a part of the whole. Except in relation to this whole, the parts have no significance.

The Ashram School, Library, University have been built up slowly. Buildings, most of them unbeautiful if I may say so, have been purchased and reconditioned. The Mother has achieved a marvellous success in this transformation of ugly buildings into really restful places where work can be carried on almost in monastic seclusion. Every effort points to the creation of places that bring repose to the soul, a cloister-like peace. Almost every class-room has trees and bushes planted all round and the attempt to create the atmosphere of the Forest Ashram is evident at every step. I was told that the Mother contemplates a big building programme. As work is carried on in detached buildings there is no feeling of being crowded. I wish the Ashram had more spacious playgrounds. However, one has to realise that the geography of the place makes it impossible to do more than what has been done.

The Library is a students' paradise—I spent every morning in the Library—I wish we could have had a place like that in our Institutions in Banares. We have built a wonderful place there—a two-mile river front of the Ganga and a mile and a half of the river Varuna. But we can never dream of building up a study centre like that in the Ashram: books in every language chosen with consummate care, books for young and old from every country on Religion, Philosophy, Social Sciences, Literaure, books on travel, beautifully illustrated series of books for children, pictures, records of the music of East and West, all these testify to the atmosphere of a world culture that seems to be slowly emerging out of the meeting of East and West in this Ashram. It is a true monument to the genius of Sri Aurobindo in whom ancient and modern thought of both East and West found a perfect unity.

There is one idea of which I have been dreaming but which I found being carried out in the Ashram. It is the periodical cultural festivals that are being organised throughout the year.

Every national culture is brought very vividly before the mind, through lectures, drama, through pictures, through music records, through the study of the various achievements of a people. It is a museum of cultures. I have been dreaming of a museum of this kind to enable young minds to realise that every nation has a contribution to make to the cultural unity of mankind. Such a synthesis is being effected in the Ashram. I do not know, of course, how many students realise the full implications of such a movement in thought. India itself is such a museum. In Banares, or Varanasi as I should now call it,

the River Ghats proclaim this universality of the human spirit. People from every part of India gather together on the banks of the Ganga. It is a strange tribute paid to the Hindu mind and its wideness and depth that in its most sacred place all the religious cultures meet. Buddha, Shankara, Ramanuja and Madhwa, Chaitanya and Kabir, Tulsidas and Ramanand and our ancient Vedic seers seem to have left the impress of their genius on the place. Even modern movements are represented there. The Aurobindo Ashram seeks deliberately to educate the youth to realise the beauty, the vastness, the depth and the height of the creative mind manifested in the cultures of the world. I have been dreaming of such a temple of the human spirit. I was happy that the Mother has been able to accomplish what has been only a dream to me. I was told that the Mother is going to erect a pavilion for exhibiting the cultural and artistic achievements of every important race or nation.

In every Institution where boys and girls meet and work together there is the sex problem. So naturally I was deeply interested in the way in which the Mother is tackling this problem. In our existing schools, work is boredom. Boredom is the natural result of the non-exercise of the creative faculties in man. To create something with one's hands, express on the material plane some conception of the human mind is a joy. Mental creation results in the joy of a higher order. The highest joy comes into being when the individual becomes the intelligent instrument of the Divine—when a human being is creatively working, the sex problem finds its natural place in the scheme of Nature. The creative energies in man are intended to build up the physical, the vital, the intellectual in man—when a boy or girl is deeply interested in the multitudinous variety of manifestations of the Spirit, then his interest in the opposite sex, his purely biological urges assume a subordinate position.

In modern life, the cinema, the advertisements, the pictures in the periodicals have made sex an enormous problem—also the suppression of all creative urges makes sex the only escape from dullness and boredom. It is in giving to the boys and girls of the Ashram a wide variety of interests that has enabled the Mother to reduce the difficulties of adolescence to a minimum. Great care is given to the development of the physical body—Games, Physical Culture, swimming, drill and a variety of exercises maintain the harmony of the human being on the physical plane. A rich intellectual pabulum feeds the mind—and on the level of the spirit, the inspiration of Sri Aurobindo and of the Mother herself is a continual uplifting force.

The evening mass drill brings the whole population of the Ashram to the main square where the Mother gives Darshan to her devotees. There is a five minutes' meditative silence. I must frankly say it was a little disappointing to myself. There was hardly time enough to switch on from vigorous activity

to the tranquil stillness of the spirit.

One point I must not fail to mention. Sex attraction derives from a difference in Physical Constitution which is heightened by the wearing of different costumes. A common uniform greatly reduces this attraction. In China, boys and girls, men and women wear nearly the same kind of uniform. I do not know if the Ashram practice was deliberately adopted. But I have no doubt that the psychological reactions are quite obvious.

There are nearly 120 teachers for a school and University population of 300. In this the Ashram is beyond the resources of even the most prosperous of Institutions—when, also, one realises that the men who are drawn to the Ashram are dedicated to the service of the Divine and that many of them have a background of rich experience, one can easily realise the tremendous influence of such an impact on the minds of the young. Several of them are men of past erudition, are scholars in different languages.

The population of the Ashram is polylingual. They learn French and English, Bengali, Hindi. French is the Mother's language, Bengali and English were Sri Aurobindo's languages. Hindi is the national language of India spoken by many, understood by nearly every one. A clever boy or girl will have at the end of the school life an equipment that hardly any other Institution can give.

Proceeding to the University the pupils have a rich legacy of human thinking at their disposal. The study of Sri Aurobindo's writings is implicit in the intellectual discipline of the University. The course is sometimes 5 years long. There are shorter courses. It reminds me, in some ways, of the system of training the monks of the Jesuit order. At the end of their 14 years of intellectual and spiritual discipline, they are ready for any tasks.

I wonder how many of the boys and girls realise the magnificent opportunities that are offered to them. I have not been able to assess either the quality or the degree of response to such an environment. It may be that only those who are sensitive to the atmosphere of the place are attracted to it. But there must be many failures to whom the place, the environment have no great significance. I had no time to discover how far and how deep the influence of the Ashram has penetrated into the consciousness of the younger people.

My stay in Pondicherry was not long enough to enable me to contact more than a very few people. However, I was able to understand in a very general way what the intention of the Founders was. When I visited the Ashram in 1917 it was a very small group of sadhaks that lived with Sri Aurobindo. In 1946 I visited Pondicherry and found the Ashram greatly enlarged. But ten years later it has not only grown in size but in quality.

SOME ASPECTS OF SRI AUROBINDO'S PHILOSOPHY

A FUNDAMENTAL distinction is being more and more recognised between those who are called professional thinkers, men of letters, philosophers or metaphysicians and those who are called men of wisdom, men who have experienced the eternal verities of life, the saints, prophets or 'enlightened ones'. The first category of thinkers build up elaborate systems of thought much on mental speculation, consistent reasoning and harmonious positing of ideas. By the help of their intellectual powers they set forth marvellous theories regarding the nature of the world, life and God. These systems of thought sometimes approach the borders of real truth and give us an inkling of what lies behind the phenomenal universe. Intellectually brilliant as these thinkers are, they build up their systems with great skill, insight and critical power, but, all the same, their experience of Truth is generally second-hand. Men of wisdom or the 'enlightened ones' are those who have perceived, felt, lived and breathed the Truth they speak of; and in a way their truths always remain as great dynamic forces, pulsating with life and power. Such souls tear off the phenomenal veil and plunge deep into the heart of the object and by direct contact and communion with the inmost being of the percept bring back a rare knowledge of an undying character. This type of knowledge may be termed 'Knowledge by Identity'—identity of the experiencing soul with the experienced object—and it gives us an authentic account of Reality. It is these men of genius who often bring down a great wealth of knowledge into the realm of the discursive reason and make the latter more fertile and creative. Again, great spiritual seekers, whose sole aim is to unravel the mystery of the Absolute and who generally dwell on the top cliff of human consciousness, have revealed luminous truths about Reality. And what is more, it is such seers who have done more for humanity in general than the builders of systems of philosophy. These seers and prophets have left a first-hand account of the Reality they experienced, and therefore the account which they have given is not intellectual but a transcription of their spiritual experiences in terms of the mind. If the builders of systems of philosophy make coherence and consistency the criterion of truth, for the seers it is the divine element in things that is the truth. Professional philosophers make use of the laws of thought, those basic principles of Contradiction and Identity, and the law of the Excluded Middle, and systematise their original conception and representative ideas into a certain type of philosophy. Here logic occupies the chief place and it plays its full part, and hence

whatever appears to be logically unsound is judged as invalid, false and wrong. This leads us ultimately to identify thought with being and declare the famous Hegelian maxim that logic is identical with metaphysics. But for those who 'move, live and have their being in Truth', the thing is entirely different; it is not the formal consistency or outward coherence of ideas that constitutes the criterion of truth, for falsehood itself can be very legitimately coherent and consistent. It is the perception of the 'soul' or 'spirit' or the higher 'values' or the 'Nous' that counts as the Truth. If one lives in one's soul, one can have a direct experience of the Truth contained in an object, for the character and dimensions of soul-knowledge are far more penetrative and intensive than rational knowledge:

> An inspired knowledge sat enthroned within
> Whose seconds can illumine more than reason's years.[1]

Then only can one be said to have possessed the truth. The undivine and the anti-divine can as well be self-consistent and coherent. This may give rise to the problem whether the 'Divine Himself' is not self-consistent or harmonious. It is true that there is a great consistency and harmony in the Divine Himself; it is much greater than the so-called patchwork or superficial harmony which we perceive on the surface of things, for ultimately 'all problems of existence are problems of harmony', as says Sri Aurobindo who himself belongs to the category of seers and prophets. He is one who realised in himself the highest Integral Divine in all Its aspects, and hence is not so much a speculative thinker or a philosopher, but a seer and a spiritual master.

Sri Aurobindo's philosophy is directly born out of his spiritual quest. Like the great Rishis of the past, he made tremendous invasions into the luminous regions of the Unknown and beleaguered the fortress of the Almighty. The vast riches which he conquered and brought to the mortal plane make up a spiritual knowledge *par excellence*, that which is spoken of in the Gita as the most secret knowledge, the 'Eternal Veda' hidden in the heart of every living being. His philosophy is an outcome of a supreme all-pervasive, comprehensive and dynamic spiritual consciousness, and thus is peculiarly different from purely mental or intellectual philosophies. Hence we should never lose sight of the fact that Sri Aurobindo's philosophy is not an intellectual interpretation of the world, though the intellect has been fully made use of in giving a systematic form to his spiritual experiences. He is not merely a thinker bent on constructing a system of philosophy by the analytical reason, but a great spiri-

[1] Sri Aurobindo's *Savitri*

tual master and seer, who has seen into the very core of things, in their creation and setting. "It is out of a silent mind", says he in a letter, "that I write whatever comes ready shaped from above." As to the origin of his philosophy, in another significant letter he writes, "When I wrote in the *Arya*, I was setting forth an overmind view of things to the mind and putting it in mental terms, that was why I had sometimes to use logic. For in such a work—mediating between the intellect and the supra-intellectual—logic has a place, though it cannot have the chief place it occupies in purely mental philosophies."[1] It would be obvious from these remarks that the sources of Sri Aurobindo's philosophy are extra-logical, or supra-logical, and logic and thought have been made the mediators, 'the Paraclete', between the luminous heavens above and the dark ignorant planes below.

Prof. G.H.Langley has remarked that Sri Aurobindo's approach to Reality is more like that of a poet than that of a thinker. Sri Aurobindo is primarily a poet, although he is also a comprehensive and systematic thinker. Prof. Langley has not underrated the intellectual value of Sri Aurobindo's philosophy. On the other hand, he says, "This fact is important, for he approaches speculative problems from the point of view of a poet and, as we shall find later, there is radical difference between any such approach and that which dominates much contemporary western thinking. This essential difference accounts for Aurobindo's early reaction against characteristic modes of rational interpretation current in the contemporary western world. It also adds value to his writings for the western thinkers. Besides possessing exceptional spiritual discernment, Aurobindo is a thinker with great intellectual power and the radical divergence in his approach should stimulate renewed reflection on assumptions that may have been taken for granted, especially on those that pertain to the meaning of truth and to the conditions under which truth can be attained."[2]

Another sympathetic English critic points out that Sri Aurobindo approaches the nature of ultimate Reality by that faculty common to both a poet and a mystic, which Indian tradition has sanctified. But the critic also adds that logical procedure has received its full due at his hands; one has to take into account his upbringing in the West in the formative period of his life and the impress upon his mind from an early age of Western methods of argument and analysis. It appears from these contentions and it is also true that Sri Aurobindo is not primarily a philosopher. He is, first of all and before everything else, a mystic and a poet, and it is from the mystic's central vision of Reality that his certitudes about its nature spring.

[1] *Letters, IV Series*, p. 14.

[2] *Sri Aurobindo.*

But how does the approach of a poet or a mystic differ from that of a thinker? Truly great poetry and artistic creations always come from a region other than the mind. The supreme poet by his inward inspiration, his deep and profound winged powers of intuition, drives straight into the nature of things. His is a knowledge by contact, communion and intermingling. His attitude towards Reality is impersonal-personal and ideal-real. He, as it were, by a higher mode of consciousness, a peculiar 'empathy' and a vibrating mobile consciousness flows into the object of perception and for the moment becomes the object itself. In order to experience the stone, he becomes the stone and thus shares the very nature of the thing perceived. This is also essentially the approach of the mystics, for they by their tremendous power of meditative imagination, feeling and love enter directly into the heart and core of objects. Mysticism truly implies communion with God, and if the 'choir of heaven and furniture of earth' are reducible to the terms of One Supreme Divine Consciousness, the mystics have the greatest power of knowing the Reality of things, since, to a great extent, they possess and embody in themselves the powers and qualities of the Divine Consciousness. In ancient times, the Rishis also had the same type of approach to Reality. They also depended on their inner experience and the suggestion of the intuitive mind. "Their aim was illumination and not logical conviction, their ideal the inspired seer and not the accurate reasoner." Knowing fully well that the Ultimate Reality escapes the categories of finite intellect, the Rishis developed a higher mode of consciousness to intuit the object. They were endowed with new capacities, new powers,—powers of the heart, the soul and the deeper psyche The Upanishads are, in this sense, truly revelations of a wider, profounder spiritual knowledge. Spiritual knowledge is always obtained by a non-sensuous direct perception, communion and identity.

It is true that Sri Aurobindo was a poet and mystic but it should also be noted that he was more than both. Above all, he was a great spiritual master. There is, however, a subtle distinction between a mystic and a spiritual master, which the Western critics have missed. It is perfectly correct to say that Sri Aurobindo was in a direct line with the greatest seers, sages and Rishis of the past, but still his attitude to the Ultimate Reality was not exactly like that of a mystic, pure and simple. First, his philosophy is not in the least couched in symbolic expressions or abstruse images, as we find in the ancient mystic lore of the Vedas and the Upanishads. Secondly, a mystic is one who merely communes with and approximates to the nature of the Ultimate Reality, but a spiritual master is one who realises and manifests in himself the divine attributes. The former seeks for the unknown, longs for it, gets glimpses of it, sometimes even touches it, but the latter gets established in a spiritual con-

sciousness. In a well-known passage of his book *Poets and Mystics*, N.K. Gupta remarks, "We can say also, using a Vedantic terminology, that the mystic consciousness gives us the *tatastha, lakshana*, the nearest approximative attribute of the attributeless; or otherwise, it is the *hiranyagarbha* consciousness which englobes the multiple play, the coruscated possibilities of the Reality: while the spiritual proper may be considered as *prajnanghana*, the solid mass, essential lineaments of revelatory knowledge the typal wave-particles of Reality."[1] We may, therefore, point out that in the consciousness of the mystic there is a play of imagination, fancy and decorative aesthesis whereas the spiritual consciousness is vision pure and simple. If the mystics are lunar in their temperament and outlook, the spiritual master is solar in his temperament and outlook. Thirdly, the intellectual procedure which is so present in Sri Aurobindo's interpretation of Reality is peculiarly absent in the mystics of the ancient times. Sri Aurobindo's philosophy is endowed with a peculiar thought-content along with its spiritual vision. This distinction between the ancient seer's approach to Reality and that of Sri Aurobindo is very fundamental to the understanding of the latter's system. Explaining this in another passage of his book, Gupta remarks, "The religious, the mystic or the spiritual man was in the past, more or less, methodically and absolutely non-intellectual: but the modern age, the age of scientific culture is tending to make him as strongly intellectual: he has to explain, not only present the object but show up its mechanism also, explain to himself, so that he may have a total understanding and a firmer grasp of the thing which he presents, and explain to others who demand a similar approach. He feels the necessity of explaining, giving the rationality, the rationale, the science of his art; for without that it appears to him a solid ground is not given to the structure of his experience; analytic power, preoccupation with methodology seems inherent in the modern creative consciousness."[2] It is precisely because the thought element, the discursive intellect did not sufficiently develop in those symbolic ages, that the old-world mystics and seers almost by-passed the element of thought and by a direct intuitive contact brought down the truths of the spirit. But since man's consciousness has to rise from the mental to the overmental and supramental stages, not only in his inner but also in his outer being, there must needs be a perfecting of the mental element as a base if full expression of these superior stages is to be achieved. In this transition, "the higher mental which is normally the field of philosophical and idealistic activities serves as the 'Paraclete', the Intercessor; it takes up the lower functionings of the con-

[1] *Poets and Mystics*, p. 36.
[2] *Poets and Mystics*, p. 29.

sciousness, which are intense in their own way, but narrow and turbid and gives, by purifying and enlarging, a wider frame, a more luminous pattern, a more subtly articulated form for the higher, vaster and deeper realities, truths and harmonies to express and manifest."[1] As a matter of fact, thought plays a double role in Sri Aurobindo's philosophy. It is the 'Paraclete', the mediator, between the upper regions of the higher consciousness and the lower regions of the world. It facilitates our ascent to those higher luminous regions. It is the "winged intercessor, our comrade, our friend and mediator in our dire distress". Secondly, thought is also a great builder, organiser and systematiser of what comes from above. It gives a suitable shape to the rich and luminous truths which descend from above. Sri Aurobindo's philosphy, therefore, throbs with a unique thought-content and it provides a great intellectual satisfaction to those who seek for it.

There is a difference not only in attitude and approach to the ultimate Reality, between Sri Aurobindo and the past mystics and sages of the Vedas and Upanishads but also in their achievements. Sri Aurobindo's achievement in the field of spirituality is much greater than that of his ancestors. He has made a definite advancement over what was given to him as a spiritual legacy of the past, and some of his original concepts are so radical and revolutionary that there is no parallel to them in the spiritual history of mankind. It would be interesting to note a few points, in brief, as to how Sri Aurobindo makes a wide departure from the achievements of the past. Let us take the idea of the 'Supermind' which is the most original and dynamic master-concept in the philosophy of Sri Aurobindo. Sri Aurobindo says that the existence of the 'Supermind' was hinted by the Vedic seers in the cryptic verses of the Vedas and he also holds that many of them individually passed into it. It is known as the 'Rit-chit' in the Vedas, and the 'Vijnana' or 'Mahat' in the Upanishads. The Supermind is the Supreme Trûth-Consciousness, the highest dynamic, creative spiritual consciousness in which 'Existence, Consciousness-Force and Delight', are inseparably and inalienably present. It is the seed truth of all individualised creation. The Vedic Rishis conceived of it, but never thought of bringing it down into the world for making it a dynamic power not only for the cure of the ills and sufferings of humanity but for the creation of a divine humanity. Sri Aurobindo clearly shows by his concrete spiritual experience and invincible logic that the Supermind's descent would bring about a tremendous change in the nature of things and establish a new race upon the earth. This idea of changing and transforming the earth-nature by the dynamic and creative spiritual power of the Supermind was completely unknown to the ancients. Sri

[1] *Poets and Mystics*, p. 36.

Aurobindo himself writes, "The Vedic Rishis never attained to the Supermind for the earth, or perhaps did not even make the attempt. They tried to rise individually to the supramental plane, but they did not bring it down and make it a permanent part of the earth-consciousness."[1] Nothing can be clearer than this statement as to the difference in goal conceived by the seers of the past and Sri Aurobindo. According to T. V. Kapali Sastry "the goal of the Vedic Rishis was to arrive at the Sun-of-Truth, the world of supernal light." He writes, "Instances can be multiplied to show that the common conception of the Vedic sages and their ideal were to win for themselves the World of the Solar Light of Truth and Immortality in the beyond, *tamasas parastat*. They did not aim at or even seem to have conceived the idea of bringing down something of the Solar Splendour here on earth and for the earth."[2] The learned author also adds that the Vedic Rishis were perfectly aware of the misery, suffering and ills of existence of their fellow beings but did not know that the remedy for them lies in the descent of the Truth-Consciousness of the Solar world. As a matter of fact, all the ancient yogas aimed at an ascent towards the Supreme Divine but Sri Aurobindo's Integral Yoga aims not only at an ascent towards it but also at the descent of the Supramental Truth-Consciousness into this terrestrial plane. It is by the descent of the highest Supramental Force that there will be an eventual cure of the maladies of our age—the clearance of the mud of the subconscient plane, and the ultimate removal of death, disease and ignorance from the field of the Inconscience. This is something which was not dreamt of in the past, and is, as such, absolutely novel and untraditional in the Yoga of Sri Aurobindo. There are also other aspects of his philosophy, namely, its integral character, synthetic spirit and axiological outlook, which are new elements and should deserve our attention.

To come back to our point, we have to discuss finally what exactly are the characteristics and method of spiritual philosophy and how far such philosophy is universally true. The last point would refer to the objective nature of spiritual knowledge.

The first characteristic of spiritual knowledge is that it is intrinsically revelatory. According to Sri Aurobindo all knowledge is innate in the inmost being of the subject. The outer expression and manifestation of knowledge is nothing but a revelation of what is already there. The evolution of such a state of knowledge is commensurable with the evolution of the individual being. Since the spirit is all-knowing, knowledge, light, power are inherent in its nature, are its inborn attributes, and hence its conditions of knowing are not

[1] *The Riddle of This World*, p. 2.
[2] *Light on the Ancients*, p. 11.

dependent on the means of the outside world. Sri Aurobindo points out that spiritual knowledge "aims at a state of knowledge by which we can touch, enter or know by identity this Eternal, Infinite or Absolute, a consciousness other than our ordinary consciousness of ideas and forms and things, a knowledge that is not what we call knowledge, but something self-evident, everlasting, infinite."[1] It is a kind of knowledge revealed in personal experience when the individual surrenders his entire being to the infinite object of his worship. It is only then that the Divine in man becomes incarnate and thus something of His nature is revealed. Spiritual truth is a truth of the spirit, not a truth of the intellect, not a mathematical theorem or a logical formula. It is a truth of the Infinite, of the one in many. Precisely, therefore, we may say that spiritual knowledge is that which has for its end the soul, the spirit in things or God or the Divine. It is essentially a knowledge of the Transcendent, the Absolute of the philosopher, in terms of personal experience.

Secondly, spiritual knowledge is knowledge by identity. The chapter on "Knowledge by Identity and Separative Knowledge" in *The Life Divine* forms the cornerstone of Sri Aurobindo's Integral Epistemology. Sri Aurobindo distinguishes as many as four types of knowledge. "A knowledge by identity, a knowledge by intimate direct contact, a knowledge by separative direct contact, a wholly separative knowledge are the four cognitive methods of nature." The first example of knowledge by identity is the knowledge of the self, of our own existence and being. Descartes would call it the most indubitable knowledge, for it is beyond all doubt and disbelief. The knowledge of the self is an unconditional knowledge and as such is a pure intuition. Knowledge by identity is fundamentally a knowledge by direct intuitive contact, as distinguished from knowledge by immediate sensuous contact. The basis of such a knowledge is evidently subjective and psychological. Analysis of the knowledge situation shows that there are three factors involved in it, the subject, the object and the process of knowing. This well-known distinction of the subject, the object and the cognitive procedure are comprehended in one whole experience in knowledge by identity. Here the object of knowledge becomes a part and parcel of the subject's consciousness, so much so that their union becomes total and complete. The 'that' and the 'what' of the object become inseparably one for the knower. On the other hand, separative knowledge always keeps a distinction between the subject and the object of knowledge. Scientific judgments are the clearest examples of such types of knowledge. But the assumption of a complete bifurcation between the subject and the object of knowledge ultimately results in an abstraction, and the concrete

[1] *The Synthesis of Yoga.*

and indivisible whole is broken up into pieces for purposes of analysis. It is for this reason that separative knowledge always gives us a distorted or half-way picture of Reality. That is why we always miss the wholeness and fulness of Reality in abstract and purely intellectual systems of thinking. But whatever may be the case, all knowledge is ultimately based upon knowledge by identity, for every type of knowledge starts as the result of a secret union or contact between the subject and the object. The process of distinction only starts much later.

Thirdly, the conditions and limits of spiritual knowledge are dependent on the growth and evolution of the individual's consciousness. In other words, the method followed in pursuing the truths of spiritual philosophy is development of experience in the line of the spirit and such a method has been called by some thinkers the adoption of a yogic method in philosophy. It is by the will and aspiration to know the Reality and the spirit in things that an increasing knowledge of Reality becomes possible. It is by a persistent rejection of one's own egoistic ideas about Reality and a gradual and progressive widening, heightening and integration of consciousness that the philosopher can hope to know more and more of Reality. It is not by mere construction and systematisation of mental ideas but by positive spiritual experiences that we begin to unravel the mystery of the Absolute.

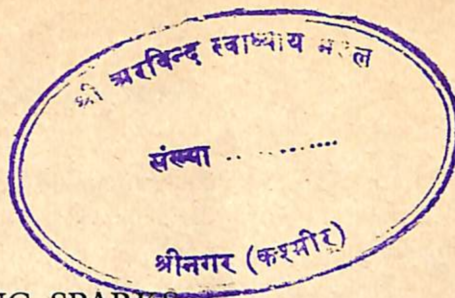
Lastly, spiritual knowledge is "the knowledge by which we become what we know". If the ancient ideal was "know thyself", the modern ideal is "be thyself". It is not enough to know : one should try to become and approximate to what one knows. Bacon has said "knowledge is power" and hence spiritual knowledge must be spiritual power, it must pulsate with a force, the subtle mantra-force, the shakti and strength of the 'Vak' or the Word. According to Sri Aurobindo, true knowledge has a twofold function: it is illuminative and also liberative. It brings light and power into the dull, dark inner recesses of the mind and also liberates the mind in the sense that it ultimately brings about a dynamic change of consciousness. Slowly and increasingly it begins to give rise to a new type of consciousness in the knower. Thus spiritual knowledge has a redemptive power, a delivering force and relieving sense. It often helps one to get free from one's misery, suffering and pain. This is one of the most significant and creative aspects of Sri Aurobindo's spiritual philosophy. It is shot through and through with a transforming power and, to say the least, the pursuit of such a philosophy at once brings about a plasticity, luminosity and openness in the mind.

Now we come to the final point. How far does spiritual knowledge possess objectivity and universality ? We have shown that it originates in the subjective and psychological experience of the knower. It is a question often put by

Western critics; these thinkers contend that a thing is objective if it is physically sensible and outwardly perceivable. But it is simply absurd to argue thus, for physical objectivity is only one order of existence, the lowest order. There are other orders of existence, namely, the supraphysical, the occult and the spiritual, the perception of which would depend on another mode of cognition. Objectivity differs from one level of experience to another level of experience. Objectivity on the sensory level may be physical, but on the level of the mind it is rational and ideal, and on the level of the spirit it is occult and spiritual. We cannot apply the standards of one level of experience to judge the experiences of another level. Besides, verifiability is another characteristic of objectivity. Are not spiritual experiences verifiable in the mind of the individual seeker with a necessary training of capacity? Moreover, the facts of spiritual experience though personal are yet impersonal, for they have remained eternal truths down the ages, and whoever undertakes the trouble of exploring and realising them can do so. The very fact that spiritual truths have persisted through the vicissitudes of time shows that they possess the greatest amount of objectivity and universality. These truths always come from a region beyond the mind and thus they carry their own certitude. Spiritual knowledge may be personal in origin but it is impersonal in background and universal in its contents.

It is in this sense that Sri Aurobindo's philosophy possesses objectivity and offers for concrete realisation the universal truths embodied in his system. His system also combines in itself diverse currents of philosophical thinking. We are therefore inclined to say that Sri Aurobindo's spiritual philosophy is not only objective and universal, but also comprehensive and catholic.

K. C. PATI



FLYING SPARKS

1) Perfect security lies in the transcendence of evil and not in the power of resistance to it.

2) He alone can manifest the Divine whose consciousness has journeyed beyond all manifestation.

3) Yogic silence is the sleep of the ego and the luminous waking of the soul.

4) When our pride falls to the ground, our spirit soars into its native sky.

5) Humility adds grace to greatness and teaches gentleness to strength.

6) Self-offering is self-transference from subjection to Nature to freedom in the Divine.

7) What man desires most ever eludes him, so that what he desires not but secretly is may claim him.

8) Chastity is the conquered immunity of the inner flame from the contamination of the surrounding smoke.

9) Virginity is the unassailable freedom of the flame from the smirch of the surrounding smoke.

10) Victory is the consciousness of fighting courageously for the triumph of Truth.

11) Dogmatism is the armour of the doubting mind, as bluster is the shield of the craven.

RISHABHCHAND

THREE POEMS ON POETRY

ART

AFTER the equatorial dithyramb,
    The Antarctica unheard—
The quiverless stare of ice probing
    The fire a-dance in each word.

After the all-abysm of the embrace,
    The tight-lipped enemy—
The silence of the steel piercing
    The kiss a-throb in each cry.

Unmeltable, implacable,
    On the sun-daze of the heart
Falls a mind bare like a crescent-edge,
    And the smitten splendour is Art.

SEER AND SINGER

EYES shut when the lips break the Spirit's seal
And rhythmic rents dawn through a measureless dark,
Lines that are gold streaks in eternity's veil:
Thought, stilled, looks inward—then God's light laughs out.

From mighty farnesses the Truth-sun strikes:
Its seer and singer bodies that mystery—
He works apart in his soul's secret strength—
Omniscient loneliness creator of worlds.

WORD-FLESH

When poems are born,
No man and woman meet:
A lion and a nebula
Vanish in a single heat!

A light that is nameless and formless
Plucks up the master of life—
Limbs of carved thunder take
An infinite silence for wife.

And by the unfathomed fusing
Of the below with the beyond,
A mystery leaps out of slumber,
Breaking time's bond.

A cry like immortal honey
Foretastes of the Truth behind
Our human grope—the almighty
Body of Supermind.

K. D. Sethna

O MYSTIC MESSENGER

O mystic messenger of space!
Convey my message to the Mother of Love,
Carry the speechless orison to my being's source
And secretly tell Her of the dying soul's wordless call.
Narrate to Her my bruises received at destiny's hands;
Recount the wounds Time ceaselessly inflicted upon me.
O atmosphere calm and quiet, O air careless, free!
No more be at peace—doom-tense is the hour.
Put on thy wings of flight and lose no time.
Quick, quick ere lost is the one opportunity
And life is left barren and stark.
Relate silently in a tone humble and meek:
"Darker gets the plight of the fainting child,
On all sides prevail obscurity and the mist."
Call on Her—the period is short.
Prostrate thyself and pray in a submissive note;
Humiliate thyself to thy breath's end.
Claim not her attention by noise and din;
Cry not in an arrogant and haughty voice;
Weep not in a clamour of demand and desire;
Shed not thy tears in lamentations weak
Lest some black nurse happen to overhear,
Lest a dark influence succeed in cutting off the finer link,
Lest an evil eye fall on the purer bond.
O carrier of the echoes of my sinking self!
Go at once, beseech, beg and throw thyself
At Her Feet, but return not
Till Her eyes of grace turn to thee,
Till a mnsic divine starts pouring from Her lips,
Till the compassion-milk streams from Her breasts,
Till a supernal love overflows from Her heart,
Till the mercy supreme responds to the last prayer
Or till thou get thyself exhausted forever.

HAR KRISHAN SINGH

BOOK IN THE BALANCE

Words of Sri Aurobindo: Published by the Sri Aurobindo Books Distribution Agency Private Ltd., ('Sahakar', 31 'B' Road, Churchgate Reclamation, Bombay-1)—Annas 6.

This little book of 62 pages, with a fine colour-photograph of Sri Aurobindo on the cover, offers us quite a wealth of illuminating sentences from his work. Of course no series of brief excerpts can do justice to the wide-sweeping harmony of the Aurobindonian world-word, but we do get note after striking note of a varied felicity to be carried in the mind and set vibrating in the midst of life's multifarious occasions as well as made mantric starting-points in lonely moments for spiritual discoveries. Perhaps the best way of giving a hint of the precious contents that cover a large number of problems, and not only Yogic ones, is to cull a few expressions:

> What is there new that we have yet to accomplish? Love, for as yet we have only accomplished hatred and self-pleasing; Knowledge, for as yet we have only accomplished error and perception and conceiving; Bliss, for as yet we have only accomplished pleasure and pain and indifference; Power, for as yet we have only accomplished weakness and effort and a defeated victory; Life, for as yet we have only accomplished birth and growth and dying; Unity, for as yet we have only accomplished war and association.
>
> What I cannot do now is the sign of what I shall do hereafter. The sense of impossibility is the beginning of all possibilities.
>
> God is one but he is not bounded by his unity.
>
> Spiritual life is the flower not of featureless but a conscious and diversified oneness.
>
> Each man belongs not only to the common humanity, but to the Infinite in himself and is therefore unique.
>
> Selfishness kills the soul; destroy it. But take care that your altruism does not kill the soul of others.
>
> There is a joy of being made and a joy of being used and a joy of being put aside and a joy too of being broken. That equal joy discover.

He who would win high spiritual degress must pass endless tests and examinations. But most are anxious only to bribe the examiner.

Peace must be ours, but not the peace of an empty or devastated nature or of slain and mutilated capacities incapable of unrest because we have made them incapable of intensity and fire and force.

All is not settled when a cause is humanly lost and hopeless; all is settled, only when the soul renounces its effort.

The holding of an ideal becomes almost an excuse for not living according to the ideal.

When knowledge is fresh in us, then it is invincible; when it is old, it loses its virtue. This is because God moves always forward.

Only those thoughts are true the opposite of which is also true in its own time and application; indisputable dogmas are the most dangerous kind of falsehood.

It is so much easier to come to vehement logical conclusions than to look at the truth which is many-sided and whole.

One cannot wisely guide that with which one is entirely out of sympathy, that which one wishes to minimise and discourage.

Art can express eternal truth, it is not limited to the expression of form and appearance.

Poetry raises the emotions...Art stills the emotions...Music deepens the emotions. Between them music, art and poetry are a perfect education for the soul.

All work done for the Divine, from poetry and art and music to carpentry or baking or sweeping a room, should be made perfect even in its smallest external detail as well as in the spirit in which it is done; for only then is it altogether a fit offering.

The good must not be subordinated to the aesthetic sense, but it must be beautiful and delightful, or to that extent it ceases to be good.

A miracle can be a moment's wonder. A change according to the Divine Law can alone endure.

A. K.

Songs of Vidyapati *by Sri Aurobindo*. Publishers : Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry. Rs. 3/8.

"Sri Aurobindo once said that he had been first and foremost a poet,... only later he became a yogi,...indeed he was born as a poet and he is a born poet"—so says Nolini Kanta Gupta in the Publisher's Note to the *Collected Poems and Plays of Sri Aurobindo* brought out in 1942.

The statement is proved once again when we see the *Songs of Vidyapati*, printed in May, 1956, long after the passing of Sri Aurobindo. It was done as early as the last decade of the 19th century, but the manuscript was confiscated by the police authorities during their search of the author's residence in connection with his political activities. It was returned to the spiritual heirs of the poet and yogi in his Ashram only very recently.

Sri Aurobindo's poetical works, including his plays, are of course comparatively less than his massive prose production; but his translations, both from Sanskrit and Bengali, constitute a fairly considerable portion of them. The book under review is not really a translation in the strict sense of the term. Almost all the poems are enlarged, decorated, even somewhat bettered in a word here, or a sentence there; and not a line is less than in the original, though some phrases here and there are left out for grace and decorum to suit the modern taste, if not for any other reason.

Vidyapati flourished in the 15th century. From Bengal he migrated to Mithila (merged in Bihar), the holy birthplace of Sita, the heroine of the Ramayana, and became the court-poet of the ruler of the province. He composed his poems in the local dialect, much akin to his mother tongue. And now full four hundred years after, these verses inspired and moved another poet of his motherland to render a few of them into English, the queen of the current languages of the world. A Nobel-laureate in literature, 'Viswakabi' Rabindranath Tagore borrowed Vidyapati's style to enrich his varied and gorgeous stock, as is very justly hinted by the publishers.

This Vidyapati is the first poet of Bengal. He may have had some predecessors on the path, but none of equal repute. The publishers have rightly observed that he was "one of the twin creators of Bengali poetry". Obviously they meant the other one to be Chandidas, the bespelled lover of the Supreme. But Chandidas was a contemporary younger than Vidyapati by more than sixteen years.

Vidyapati wrote several books, out of which Sri Aurobindo touched only some Vaishnav songs; Sri Chaitanya, an 'avatar' of the Vaishnav cult, would gather inspiration by chanting them on occasion. These poems depict 'Madhur

Bhav' (conjugal relation with the Divine), the most difficult and the last stage of the five ways of 'Sadhana' in Vaishnavism. Naturally when some poets are tempted to handle this lofty ideal and when many followers of the sect try to tread this path, they drag it so considerably down that the school of the divine sage Narad and of the god-intoxicated celebate Sukadeva Goswami is now scarcely what it should be.

To illustrate the quality of the young poet's composition, and to show what real 'Love' in Vaishnavism is, we may quote a pithy passage :

Love in true hearts gold surpasses.
To the fire golden masses
Double price and beauty owe.
Loves by trial greater grow.
Love, my sweet,'s a wondrous thing
Imperishable in suffering.
Break it, but it will not break.
Love, like fibres of the lake,
Thrives on torture; beaten, grows;
Bleeding, thrills to sweeter rose....

The publishers have done well in giving the original in Devanagri script —there will be an All-India appeal by it—though Sri Aurobindo himself had read "a very old Bengali version" and, as we are also informed, the first printed copy was in Bengali character. A glossary at the end would have, we believe, enhanced the importance of the book.

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The appearance of a new Poetry magazine is heartening news to the lovers of poetry whose number is dwindling rather disconcertingly. That many people have sent generous donations to the publishers is a cheering symptom in an otherwise bleak situation. It cannot be gainsaid that certain modern trends in poetry itself are to a large extent responsible for this waning of interest. It is rarely that one comes across a poem which carries the breath of heights; rather most of the poems are blighted by the stink of the nethermost regions explored by psycho-analysis.

If the first poem in the first issue gives some indication of the things to come, then we may expect the journal to play the role for which poetry is destined, i.e. leavening the human consciousness with a touch of the celestial radiance. The poem referred to is by Walter de la Mare: *Analysts.* It is a dig at the Analysts for whom Nature means only stench and mire, and the marvel of the rose has to be traced to the analysis of mud only. But, says the poet, Shakespeare, Newton and Michelangelo also came Nature's way, and our dreams are not influenced by suppressed sexual impulses merely but by mind and soul no less than body:

A subtle and miraculous Three;
    Since even in dream
Their tri-twined influences twist and gleam.

Why, then, so dingily
    The theme perplex
By strum—strum—strumming on *one* note, called Sex.

The other two poems of de la Mare are also a sort of didactic epigrams, something *à la* the Indian poet Bhartrihari. The poem *Rift* runs:

We argue on of gods, not God,
And might all strife resign,
If only I could find in yours,
What you reject in mine.

Roy Campbell's *La Mancha in Wartime* and Marya Zaturenska's *A Song with Refrain* are poems characteristically modern in the sense that both echo a deep sense of dissatisfaction with the self-destructive trends of the present civilisation which has turned the world into:

A Land of Crosses, in the law's despite,
Where every chance designs a crucifix....
Where men have waifed the land with fire and steel...

Some of the lines are packed with deep significance. The modern age of technical advance stirred the whole earth with great promises of a life opulent and free from all wants and diseases and blossoming in entire freedom from all tyranny economic and political. Before this 'victorious analysis of the externalities of Nature' misery was there but life was not so agitated and feverish nor rushing headlong to self-annihilation. This the poet puts in a very poignant way :

The Earth, that patient labourer for blows,
It seems, that brays prophetic from the metal,
Defrauded of the life-sufficing nettle
For promises of corn that never grows !

But, whereas Campbell ends with a note of despair, Marya Zaturenska's angel, in spite of threading his way "Among the whirlpools of obscenity", blazes the trail for us towards a new life emerging out of this chaos. Though, says the poet, the hesitant saints close their eyes on the brutal world of the rocking mid-century yet they

silently
Perform with grace their miracle and depart,
But leave a blessing on the astonished heart.

It is a poem of great hope and enshrines the vision of a new humanity regenerated by the Divine Grace with all the evil mopped clean:

All lives find their one miracle, to all will come
The angel with the lily wand who cries...
"The evils that you feared face you and fly."

And then

Soon all the candles burn, soon all our loves are known,
Foeman and friend are one—
Beyond the precinct of the obscuring sun,
Among the olive trees and lilies He

Reveals the oasis in the furthest sea
Bringing the grace that is denied to none
When all is done, done well and none to see—
Time, time alone has tamed and ravished me.

The same note is heard in Herbert Read's *Gala*, i.e. the artificial lights of the material civilization do not dispel the abysmal darkness that broods over us. This false glimmer does not lead to the self-subsistent light but to unredeemed darkness :

...Such artifice could not dispel
The sense of endless space, of burning spheres
Expended in a black abyss.

And the poem ends with the line :

And what is born brightly, darkly lives and dies.

Modern Astronomy, though its first effect was the realisation that the whole earth with its human drama is just one speck among trillions lost in a boundless void and ever exposed to the menace of a sudden end, has yet mellowed man's attitude towards his own significance, and the crumbling down of the walls of his ego will universalise his consciousness and raise his values of life. To make use of some lines of Sri Aurobindo's, the ultimate incentive, if one's inner response is right, is to the experience :

I contain the whole world in my soul's embrace :
In me Arcturus and Belphegor burn.
To whatsoever living form I turn
I see my own body with another face—

or, to put it broadly in one Aurobindonian line:

My soul, unhorizoned, widens to measureless sight.

A faint echo of the sense of infinite space, appalling at the start, is heard, with a semi-paradoxical turn, in the last stanza of Robert Frost's *Desert Spaces :*

They cannot scare me with their empty spaces
Between stars—on stars where no human race is.
I have it in me so much nearer home
To scare myself with my own desert places.

Anne Riddler's *Mountain Shrine Near Lerici* is a poem of rare charm. It is not only profound and imbued with a deep religious spirit but most exquisite in some of the descriptive passages.

At the end there are three translations of poems by Indians. We regret to remark a general tendency to publish only translations of Indian work, which of necessity lack the rhythmic power of the original. Many Indians have written magnificent poems in English directly, which will elicit the admiration of all unprejudiced readers of English poetry. It is rather of good augury that the Indian spirit has found expression in a world language which has wonderfully responded to all the demands made on it. Sri Aurobindo's massive poetical works stretch over a wide range—lyrical, heroic, philosophic and spiritual. He has brought out new possibilities of rhythm by introducing quantitative metres in English poetry. In his wake many of his disciples whose command of the language is as good as of one's own mother tongue have composed excellent poems in English. What is more, this poetry opens up new heavens for the Muse, revealing—in Sri Aurobindo's words at the end of a sonnet—

> Calm faces of the gods on backgrounds vast
> Bringing the marvel of the infinitudes,
> Through glimmering veils of wonder and delight
> World after world bursts on the awakened sight.

After the poems-section there are valuable review articles on books and a regular feature of the magazine appears to be a Contemporary Portrait. This time it is a long article on Walter de la Mare.

We hope the editor will bring Spiritual India closer to Europe and America. India would be ill-represented if the *Poetry Chicago* in its Indian poetry issue omits Indians writing mystic poetry in English. We wish the magazine a long and successful career and hope it will maintain its high spirit.

RAVINDRANATH KHANNA

IS OUR CHRONOLOGY FOR ANCIENT INDIA CORRECT?

Some Criticisms and Suggestions

4

BEFORE we come to grips with the problem of the names in Rock Edict XIII, we must notice the two arguments which are bound to be pressed against us in order to weaken our hold. One is that Asoka, after saying "Here and in the bordering dominions" and then naming the Yavana rajas who have their territories starting across his borders, goes on to say: "(likewise) down below, where are the Chodas, the Pandyas, as far as the Tamraparniyas,—likewise here in the king's dominions, among the Yavanas and Kambojas...." A radical differentiation seems to be made by Asoka between these Yavanas who are part of his kingdom and the Yavana rajas who are real foreigners. From that differentiation the presumption that the foreign Yavanas are post-Alexandrine Greek kings is seen to arise, especially as all the five names of the latter find some echo in those inscribed by Asoka. And, in support of this argument, there is the second one which asks us to look at the phrase immediately after the mention of "the bordering dominions": "even as far as 600 yojanas, where (dwell) the Yavana king Amtiyoka and, beyond this Amtiyoka, the four kings..." This phrase is said to remove the Yavana rajas far indeed from the Yavana-group within the Asokan empire and just far enough to stop with Epirus which is nearly 600 yojanas (2700 miles) away, and the word "beyond" indicates precisely the way the four Greek kingdoms were geographically disposed in general relation to the Greek kingdom of Antiochus II.

The second argument is indeed strong. But the first, apart from the support given by the second and apart from the names of the kings, has no real substance. Even if we concede the dissimilarity between the two sets of Yavanas, how do the rajas become Greek unless all Yavanas are taken to be Greek and those who are within the empire are supposed to be the pre-Alexandrine colony of Indo-Greeks dear to our historians? The argument is circular, and the very demarcation between the Yavanas as a group "here in the king's dominions" and the individual Yavana rajas of "the bordering dominions" is highly debatable. For, these five Yavana rajas are not the only ones we know

of in relation to Asoka. There is a sixth whose name has reached us across the centuries and supplies us with a clue to their nationality. We have already mentioned it by quoting from Bhandarkar the passage about Sophytes, but we did not specify what inscription it is from which Bhandarkar had taken it in relation to the question of "Yavana". It occurs in the very inscription of Rudradaman II that has been drawn into service of Sir William Jones's hypothesis —the famous Junagarh inscription. There the dam repaired by Rudradaman's engineer is recorded to have been dealt with in Asoka's day by Asoka's viceroy in Saurashtra, "the Yavana raja Tushaspha."[1] Tushapha is a Yavana raja who is definitely not outside Asoka's empire, and there is nothing to make us think of him as not belonging to the same group as the Yavanas within the kingdom. Why should we then think of the other five rajas as completely differing from that group instead of being part of an overflow of it across the Asokan frontiers? Just as there is a Yavana raja within the frontiers, there can be Yavanas across them enjoying complete independence yet not essentially different in race from the Asokan subjects, and their kings would be of that stock which we find no reason to consider in any sense derived from Greece. In other words, Asoka's five Yavana rajas could very well belong to the people, along the rivers Kabul and Indus, between India and Persia, whom all scholars identify as the Yavana neighbours of the Kambojas and Gandharas and whom we may regard as Indians Persianised or Perso-Indians.

The Persian touch clearly emerges in the name "Tushaspha". Vincent Smith has emphasised this touch. Against the emphasis Raychaudhuri has urged that just as we hear of the Yavana Dhammadeva, the Saka Ushavadata (Rishabha-datta) and the Kushana Vasudeva because the Greeks and other foreigners adopted Hindu names, we may hear of a Yavana with a Persianised name who could still be a Greek.[2] But this is special pleading and can have force only if we know already that Asoka flourished after Alexander and after the possible pre-Alexandrine contact of India with Greece through the Persians. In general, what is driven home to us by "Tushaspha" is that we need not go far afield towards Greek countries at just the mention of Yavana rajas.

This point would not be weakened one jot if we adopted the reading backed by Barua,[3] *Asoka Mauryasyamte* ("after Asoka Maurya"), instead of *Asoka Mauryasyakrite* ("for Asoka Maurya"). The reading is, of course, unreasonable: Dr. Sircar remarks,[4] "If Tushasphā flourished after Asoka, I do not understand why Asoka's name should have been mentioned at all. At

[1] *The Age of Imperial Unity*, pp. 61-2.
[2] *The Political History of Ancient India*, p. 213.
[3] *Asoka and His Inscriptions*, pp. 147-8.
[4] In a letter dated 4-10-1956.

least such a procedure of recording the date of an event seems to be unknown in Indian epigraphy." Especially far-fetched would it be to make Tushaspha post-Asokan except as an immediate successor in time; but as such a successor he should have been coupled with Asoka's son rather than with Asoka himself. The charge of artificiality is unescapable. If still the reading is accepted as an alternative, the sense it must carry of "immediately post-Asokan" keeps for us in "Tushaspha" the same momentous clue of the Perso-Indian as before.

Let us remember that even Jayaswal does not deny the Perso-Indian stamp on his Greek colony which he believes Alexander's army to have met. He has remarked: "The name of their city, Nysa, is a strong evidence of their Persian connection. They had been Hinduised. Alexander's companions first regarded them as Indians."[1] M. de St Martin has opined that the place called Nysa points to the existing village of Nysatta "near the northern bank of the river Kabul at less than two leagues below Hashtnagar", the place which "ought to be of Median or Persian foundation, since the nomenclature is Iranian, the name Nysa or Nisaya which figures in the cosmographic geography of the Zend Avesta being one which is far-spread in the countries of Iran."[2] Grierson, from a clue supplied by Yaska's *Nirukta* (II. 8), has identified the language of the Yavanas' neighbours Kambojas as "Sanskrit with an infusion of Iranian words to which they gave Indian inflexions" or else "a language partly Indo-Aryan and partly Iranian."[3] Everything we know bears out Buddhaghosa in whose view[4] the Yonas, like the Kambojas and other frontier peoples of India's west and north-west, were *Pārasakavannā*, Persianised in their general habits, customs and usages.

If it is perfectly natural that a Yavana raja should carry a Persianised name like Tushaspha, may we not look among the north-western Indian tribes for affinities with the names of Asoka's other Yavana rajas —"Amtiyoka, Tulamaya, Amtekini, Maga, Alikasudara", as Barua recounts them? But let us first scrutinise the alleged Greek affinities. Do the names inscribed by Asoka really correspond to Antiochus, Ptolemy, Antigonus, Magas and Alexander or is it the lack of doubt in our historians' minds about Sandrocottus and Chandragupta Maurya that creates an illusion of strong correspondence? What this lack of doubt does is well illustrated, without any realisation of its serious import, by Bhandarkar in discussing the Greek kings. He writes in utter good-faith: "Amtekina or Amtekini, as Bühler has remarked,[5] corresponds to the Greek

[1] *Hindu Polity*, p. 148.
[2] McCrindle, *Ancient India according to Megasthenes and Arrian*, p. 183, footnote.
[3] *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1911, p. 801 f.
[4] Barua, *Inscriptions*, II, p. 259.
[5] *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft*, XL.137.

Antigenes rather than to Antigonus. But as no king named Antigenes is known, Amtekini has been identified with Antigonus Gonatus of Macedonia."[1] Bühler's remark should have led us to think our identifications a little shaky. Instead of re-examining our position we went straight to Antigonus and were quite satisfied with him. The discrepancy between Amtekini and Antigonus may not be great, but it proves that the case for the Greek kings on account of their names is not the absolutely flawless fivefold correspondence it is generally supposed to be.

The flaw marked by Bühler manages to get minimised because the rest of the names are taken to be impeccable. But here too there may be the effect of a willing frame of mind. With regard to Tulamaya we have believed that the "P" of Ptolemy was mute to the ear of antiquity as it is to ours, but we have already seen what Indian name the geographer Ptolemy heard as similar to his own : "Siriptolemaios" for "Siri Pulumavi". A more momentous issue in this connection arises from the fact that the names of the Yavana rajas appear in more than one form in the edicts. Which is the basic form ? On the answer to this question depends what Asoka really intended. The forms are various because the edicts are inscribed in several variants of what is called Prakrit or locally spoken language as distinguished from the standard literary tongue that is Sanskrit. But there must surely be laws governing the changes. One well-known law is that "r" becomes "l" in certain Prakrit dialects, particularly in what is called Magadhi : for instance, "raja" becomes "laja" in Asoka's own inscriptions at Kalsi. However, as Bhandarkar says, *ra* may, owing to the Magadha court language, become *la*, but this is clear that if...the original is really *la*, it cannot become *ra* in any version."[2] So we have a plain pointer about the name "Tulamaya" : if anywhere we come across "Turamaya" we have a proof that the original had no "l" in it. And this is exactly what we do come across. The initial "Tula" is replaced by "Tura" in some inscriptions, just as, the other way round, the terminal "sudara" of Alikasudara is replaced in some contexts by "sudala". But the initial "Ali" of the latter name is never substituted by "Ari", which proves that "Ali" is the original initital form and "sudara" the original terminal form. Likewise we must conclude that "Turamaya" is the original name. How then are we to equate it with "Ptolemy" ? If a name in Prakrit answered to "Ptolemy", it would never have the "l" altered to "r". We imagine Ptolemy to be shadowed forth in Tulamaya because, eager to find a Greek equivalent, we mistakenly take "Tula" to be on a par with "Tura". If we start, as we must, with only Turamaya as

[1] *Asoka*, pp. 49-50.
[2] *Asoka*, p. 36.

basic, the suggestion of Ptolemy is illogical as well as remote. The alleged fivefold correspondence is shattered still further—by a stroke against which there is little defence. And we have a name which sounds part Persian part Indian.

One may plead : "Although dialect-rules do not render possible a change from an original 'l' to 'r', carelessness may surely lead to it. In the Puranas, for instance, the Andhra king Pulomavi or Puloman is once named not only as Puliman but also as Puriman (Pargiter's *Dynasties of the Kali Age*, p. 42, note 98). Again, it is not impossible that when originally 'Ptolemy' was pronounced to an Indian ear the 'l' got misheard as 'r'. The two letters are, after all, not far removed in sound form each other."

The arguments are easy to refute: "The 'r' occurs in the versions of both Shahbazgarhi and Girnar,[1] places which are very much apart, and, unlike Kalsi, just the ones where an original 'r' would remain 'r'. Besides, it is quite improbable that no carelessness should be at play in 'Alikasudara' to make it 'Arikasudara' in even one of those two versions and that only 'Turamaya' should come about by mistake. So the analogy from 'Puriman' is double inapt. As for an original mishearing of 'Ptolemy', an Indian whose dialect is like that of Kalsi and converts 'r' into 'l' would hardly commit a mistake the other way round, while an Indian with a dialect like Shahbazgarhi's or Girnar's would in general be unlikely to commit it and still more so when he has the responsibility of conveying a foreign king's name to his own king. Diplomatic relations on the highest level would tend to preclude carelessness. Moreover, if an ambassador of Ptolemy himself brought his master's name to the Magadhan court of Pataliputra where the dialect is known to have been like Kalsi's and 'r' would be pronounced as 'l', there would be no 'r' in both the Shahbazagarhi and Girnar versions unless it were present in the originally heard royal name. And indeed we are told by historians[2] who identify Sandrocottus with Chandragupta Maurya that Ptolemy, whom Pliny reports to have sent an ambassador named Dionysus to the Indian court, must have sent him to either Bindusara or Asoka. The name of the Greek king must therefore be taken by our historians to have been communicated on the highest level at the court of Pataliputra and to have been heard distinctly with an 'r'. But how could 'Ptolemy' have there been communicated and heard with an 'r' ? No, 'Turamaya' cannot be explained away in any manner. And if it cannot, it certainly does not answer to 'Ptolemy'."

[4] *The Inscriptions of Asoka*, edited by D.R.Bhandarkar and S.Majumdar, p. 53.

[6] *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 70.

Here it is worth noting that Weber[1] has claimed Asuramaya, the famed Indian astronomer whom the Epics repeatedly mention, to be no other than the Greek astronomer Ptolemy. He conceives with ease that what must have been originally Turamaya became Suramaya and then Asuramaya. The learned doctor has certainly let his imagination frisk away with him, forgetting even that the Indian astronomer's name was really Maya and that Asura was only an epithet prefixed to it, just as at times Danava was used as a suffix for the same name. If "Asuramaya" proves anything, it is that the term "maya" which could be deemed a legitimate Indianisation of "maios", the terminal of the Greek "Ptolemaios", can be an Indian appellation for a man and need not suggest anything Greek. Even the initial "Tura" has a kin in the opening sound of the Puranic name Turvasu from the Vedic Turvas the name, according to the Mahabharata (1, 79. 42), of the Yavanas' ancestor. Both halves of "Turamaya" can thus claim a non-Greek character. Weber failed to see it in either half, fine scholar though he was, and wandered away into fantasy through the mischief of the Yavana-Greek complex on the one hand and the Sandrocottus-Chandragupta complex on the other. And, besides overlooking the adjectival status of "Asura", he also never waited to ascertain whether an "l" clearly audible between two vowel-sounds in a Greek name can turn to "r" in Prakrit (or, for that matter, in Sanskrit).

A few words about "Alikasudara" which we have shown to be the basic form of the last name in Asoka's list will drive this point home after indicating a further mistake in our identifications. We have too easily recognised "Alikasudara" as a possible equivalent of "Alexander" in Asokan Prakrit. Princep who first deciphered Asoka's inscriptions calls the Asokan language a cross between Sanskrit and Pali. Rhys Davids considers it a semi-conversational dialect much influenced by the aim at approximation to Middle High Indian Pali and also to standard High Indian Sanskrit.[2] Wilson and Lassen regard it as distinctly Pali and we may at least say with A.K.Mazumdar that the Buddhist chronicles of Ceylon show a Pali fairly resembling Asokan Prakrit,[3] as Bhandarkar also implies when he compares Monumental Prakrit with that Pali.[4] Now, the district round the city of Alexandria founded by Alexander the Great near Kabul is often mentioned in the Pali literature as the *dīpa* (Sanskrit *dvīpa*) or Doab of Alasanda.[5] If Asoka referred to Alexander of Epirus

[1] *The History of Indian Literature*, (Popular Re-issue, 1914) p. 257.
[2] *Buddhist India*, p. 154.
[3] *The Hindu History of India*, p. 549.
[4] *Asoka*, pp. 209-212.
[5] *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 103.

we should expect something like Alasanda as the most natural Prakrit Indianisation by him of that king's name. In Sanskrit literature Sylvain Levi[1] reads a solitary yet definite reference to Alexander the Great in a passage in Bāna'[1] *Harshacharita* stating that "Alasa-Chandakosa having conquered the earth did not penetrate into *Strirājya* or the Kingdom of Women": Alexander is here meant because Greek tradition mentions his conquest of a Kingdom of Amazons which he refrained from entering as a special favour. The Sanskritic form, except for its fantastic last two syllables, agrees with the Pali in the initial syllables "Alasa", and what follows is not far from the Pali termination. The emergence of "Alikasudara", for the name of the Macedonian conqueror, from any mixture of Pali and Sanskrit tendencies seems difficult and unnatural. By its presence in Asoka's edict, the fivefold correspondence appears to suffer a third blow.

We see in "Alasa" that a clearly audible "l" of a Greek name remains "l" in both Prakrit and Sanskrit versions. Another instance is in the famous Besnagar inscription where its author "Heliodorus, son of Dion" becomes only "Heliodora, son of Diya".[2] In the same inscription, even an "l" joined with a consonant retains its identity: the Prakrit corresponding to "Antialkidas", the name of one of the Indo-Greek Bactrian kings who ruled over part of India in probably the last quarter of the second century B.C. and has left us some coins, is "Amtalikita".[3] A coin that has recently come to light of the last of these kings, Heliocles, bears in the Kharoshthi part of its legend the name Heliakreyasa.[4] Here the "l" after a consonant turns into "r" but the clear one flanked by vowels stays the same. The names of two Saka kings of a little later date, who use Greek on the obverse and Kharoshthi on the reverse of their coins, show Spalirises becoming Spalirisha or Spalirisasa,[5] and Asilises becoming Ayilisha.[6] These instances clinch our additional contention that "Ptolemy" could never have turned into the basic form "Turamaya".

As for Amtiyoka, Maga and Amtekini, we find Amtiyaka and Amtiyoga and Atiyoga, Maka, Amtekina and Amtikini as the alternatives in the inscriptions. Out of these Atiyoga seems a distortion. If we go by the versions of Shahbazgarhi and Mansehra, places nearest to and perhaps even within the Yona province of Asoka's empire, the originals probably are: Amtiyoka, Maka,

1 *Memorial Sylvain Levi*, p. 414.
2 Raychaudhuri, *The Political History of Ancient India*, p. 271.
3 *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 115.
4 *Journal of the Numismatic Society of India*, Vol. XI, 1949, p. 101.
5 *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 124; Raychaudhuri, *Op. cit.* p. 240.
6 *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 127.

Amtikini. But the rest appear to be legitimate variants. And when the Greek incubus is weakened by Amtekini and Alikasudara and repelled by Turamaya, all the names affine themselves in a sympathetic ear with those of the tribes bordering on north-western India, of which old Indian literature speaks or to which the historians of Alexander's invasion refer—tribes between India proper and Persia. Or else they seem to have other Perso-Indian associations.

Arrian tells us of two Indian tribes that inhabited the district west of the river Indus as far as the river Kophen and that "were in ancient times subject to the Assyrians, afterwards to the Medes and finally submitted to the Persians, and paid tribute to Cyrus, the son of Cambyses, as ruler of their land."[1] Arrian calls these tribes Astakenoi and Assakenoi. The Indian form of the second name is, as we noted, Asvakayana; it is also written Aśvaka, just as that of the first name is equivalent to Ārshtaka.[2] In connection with them we cannot help thinking of the terminal sound of Amtiyaka. The Markandeya Purana mentions a north-western tribe with the terminal sound exactly echoing this Yona king's: Kalatoyaka.[3] Such a sound seems to have been common in the north-western regions. Kalhana, in his *Rajatarangini*, speaks of an astrologer in a village of what was called Yona territory in mediaeval times during the reign of Maharaja Kalasa and gives his name as Loshtaka. Several kings of Kashmir mentioned by him may also be listed: Janaka, Jalauka, Durlabhaka, the last-named belonging to the dynasty known as Karkotaka. Indian kings too may be remembered: Sisuka, Apilaka, Mundalaka of the Andhra dynasty, Bhadraka and Pulindaka among the Sungas, Salisuka among the Mauryas, Suryaka of the Pradyota dynasty. The way in which the more familiar form, Amtiyoka, ends has a parallel in the name Asoka itself. The word "yoka" or "yoga" is thoroughly Indian. The terminal sound in Amtekina is almost as in the name of the Indian king Udasina. The initial sound of both Amtiyoka and Amtekini is present in Amtagiri, the name of the tract occupied by a north-western tribe in the Mahabharata.[4] Perhaps Amtiyoka as well as Amtekini carries a prefix with the same significance as Asoka's frequent word for a border people: Amta. There is no need to look for non-Indian or non-Persian originals of either appellation.

As for Maka and Maga the Persian association is pretty clear. If we look at Herzfeld's map of the Achaemenian empire,[5] we cannot fail to see a south-

[1] Arrian, *Indika*, I, 1-3.
[2] Barua, *Asoka*, p. 100.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 102.
[4] XII, 207, 43.
[5] Barua, *Asoka*, facing p. 344.

eastern province called Maka (modern Makran). Everybody has heard of the term Magus for a Persian priest: we read, in the Puranas, of the *Sākadvipa* where dwell the *Maga dvijas* who worship the sun-god[1]: we have in the India of later times the Maga-Brahmanas, the Persian priests who migrated to India and contributed to the Ujjain school of astronomy.[2] There is also the name "Moga" of a Saka king mentioned in a Taxila copper-plate and recognised to be the same as "Mauakes", the name of the leader of the Sakas at Gaugemala, which is formed from the stem of "Maues" and the derivative suffix—*ka*.[3] The Indian association is in names like Meghaswati and Megha Satakarni of Andhra kings. Then there is the asterism repeatedly mentioned in the Puranas: Magha. There is also the dynasty Magha of Kausambi supposed to have been founded by a lieutenant of the Kushanas named Magha who is perhaps the same as the prince called Magha, with the title Devaputra, in an inscription on a broken statue-image found in 1937.[4]

Alikasudara brings to mind by its initial sound the north-western tribe Alimadra.[5] The terminal sound connects with the people who are said by Strabo to have served the Persians as mercenary troops and whose Greek form is given by Arrian as Sudrakai (a variant of Oxydrakai which corresponds, as we saw, to the Indian Kshudraka). That terminal "sudara" is even more directly heard in the name of the tribe known as Sudra to both the Mahabharata[6] and the Markandeya Purana[7] and as Sodrai to the historians of Alexander's invasion.[8] It is also the Prakrit of the Sanscrit Sundara, a name borne by one of the Andhra kings.

Of course all this is suggestive rather than conclusive testimony. But to think of Indian nomenclature, with a Persian tinge in it at places, or *vice versa*, is not unnatural once we rid our minds of the Yavana-Greek equation. At any rate, there remains, to put it mildly, an extreme uncertainty about the so-called Greek correspondences and the path towards nearer affinities is hardly blocked.

[1] Brahmanda Purana, XX. 71f; Agni Purana, 119.21.

[2] *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 144, footnote 1.

[3] J. Allan, *The Cambridge Shorter History of India*, p. 68.

[4] D.C. Sircar in the *Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Journal*, Vol. XIV, p. 9.

[5] Barua, *Asoka*, p. 102.

[6] II, 27-32.

[7] Barua, *Op. cit.*, p. 102.

[8] *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 51. McCrindle, *Alexander*, p. 293. Jayaswal writes in *Hindu Polity*, Part I, p. 156: "The Sudra republic is evidently the same whom Alexander met in Lower Sind and whom we have identified with the Brahminical Saudras or *Saudrāyanas* of the *Gana-pātha*. According to grammar it was based on the proper name (of a man) *Sūdra*, not the caste name."

What about the "600 Yojanas" within which Amtiyoka and the four kings "beyond" him are located by Asoka? Before we answer this query we may remark that by themselves the 600 yojanas carry no inevitability of a Greek suggestion. They can be in any direction and not necessarily in that of Syria, Egypt, Cyrene, Macedonia and Epirus unless, again, we preconceive "Yavana" to mean "Greek" and nothing else. But we may admit that if we have to accept a distance of 600 yojanas terminating in a "beyond" to Amtiyoka's kingdom, the Greek suggestion offers a ready-made suitable situation which certainly recommends itself in general and constitutes in some measure a difficulty for our theory of north-western neighbouring non-Greek Yavanas. What in fairness is required of us is a new interpretation doing away with the need to accept that distant "beyond".

Jayaswal[1] has an alternative translation of the phrase "ashashu pi yojanasateshu" which has been commonly made to connote "even as far as 600 yojanas" by taking "shashu" as equivalent to "sha(t)su" ("six"). He argues that "sha" for "six" is nowhere met with in Pali and that in Asoka's inscriptions themselves we have, for "six", "sadu" as in Pillar Edict IV ("saduvisati"). Basing himself on Bühler's rendering which makes Amtiyoka live 600 yojanas away and the other kings still farther off, he yet considers the distance far too short of the overland route from Patna to Syria. This is an interesting point, and he tries to strengthen it by saying that to divide "ashashu" into "a" and "shashu" is unnatural not only because "sha" for "six" is outlandish but also because "a" for "as far as" is unlikely here : the same inscription uses "ava" (as in "ava Tambapannya") for "as far as", though, as the Girnar version of Rock Edict II shows, the use of "a" in this sense is not unknown. So he is inclined to interpret "ashashu" as a country-name : "Asia". He writes : "The Greeks associated the name Asia with the country east of Greece. The limit was not definite to the east, but it was more closely connected with the immediate east (Asia Minor and the neighbourhood). Asoka is using the expression as the Greeks at the time, or rather the court of Antiochus, used it. Asia originally was an eastern term and Asoka is employing not the Greek feminine form but the base with Indian inflexion to denote a country. It is noticeable that the pronunciation is preserved in all recensions, the 'sh' is not allowed to become dental. Probably in the time of Asoka Persia was distinguished by its name from the rest of Western Asia, Asia Minor and Syria, which alone were called Asia in the narrow sense." Jayaswal's translation then of the whole phrase is : "Even in (that part of) Asia where Antiochus (dwells), which is 100 yojanas (in length)". In explanation he

[1] *The Indian Antiquary*, Dec. 1918, p. 297.

says : "This was the place where Asoka had achieved his 'dharmavijaya' or conquest by religion. In other words, not throughout the whole of the Empire of Antiochus but in Syria only he succeeded in propagating Buddhism, and this portion of Asia, according to the information received by the Emperor (evidently from his missionaries) was 100 'yojanas' in length. A hundred yojanas will be about 450 miles, a measurement of Syria under Antiochus. 'Yojanasateshu' qualifies the preceding Ashashu. (Another possible interpretation is : 'Even in Asia, over hundreds of yojanas'.)"

There are too many special assumptions in Jayaswal's reading of "ashashu" as "Asia". It is actually more likely that Buddhism should have spread in the countries east of Syria than in Syria itself. At least in later times, as Alberuni has recorded, this was exactly the case[1]. Also, to exclude Persia from the meaning of the term "Asia" is arbitrary. Again, to say that Asoka used the term as the court of Antiochus might have used it is another unmitigated hypothesis. Besides, the term itself, though orginally eastern, had no currency in ancient Indian speech and is highly improbable in Asoka's mouth. Lastly, all that we have written against the present view about Asoka's date gives it still greater improbability, for the employment of the term by the Greeks is not very ancient. Hence, even the more general version—"Even in Asia, over hundreds of Yojanas"—is unacceptable. But Jayaswal does succeed in throwing into relief the possibility of criticising the interpretation "as far as six" for "ashashu" and of separating "ashashu" from "yojanasateshu". His point about "600 yojanas" falling short of the overland route to Syria from Patna makes us think that if "ashashu" is not equivalent to "in Asia" it may represent "ash(t)ashu" ("eight"), whether we connect it with "yojanasateshu" or no. The translation by G. Srinivasamurthy and A.N. Krishna Aiyangar[2] has actually this reading, and what goes in its favour is that the very first word of R.E.XIII, in the Shahbazgarhi version, is also "Asha"[3] and is universally taken to be numbering as eighth the year of Asoka's reign in which he conquered Kalinga. But Srinivasamurthy and Aiyangar connect their reading with "yojana sateshu" and take the five kings to be Greek. As we have remarked in relation to "six", we may admit in relation to "eight" that if the expression is linked with "yojanasateshu" the Greek suggestion is the most plausible at first sight in the immediate and narrow context of the five names. To remove every vestige of it we have to disjoin the two expressions as Jayaswal has done, yet without introducing "Asia".

1 *The Age of Imperial Unity* p. 616.
2 *The Edicts of Asoka* (Adyar Edition, 1950).
3 *The Inscriptions of Asoka* by D.R. Bhandarkar and S. Majumdar, p. 46.

If we carefully weigh Rock Edict II where also Amtiyoka figures, the need of doing away with the number 600 or 800 for the yojanas becomes manifest. There we read : "Everywhere in the dominions of King Priyadarsin, Beloved of the gods, as well as those of his frontier sovereigns, such as the Chodas, Pandyas, Satyaputra, Keralaputra, as far as the Tamraparni, the Yona King called Amtiyaka and also those who are the neighbours of Amtiyaka...."[1] Well, if, even as the crow flies, Macedonia and Epirus are nearly 3000 miles away, with both land and sea dividing them from India, and if even Egypt and Cyrene are almost the same distance, is it not fantastic to consider them the "dominions" of "frontier sovereigns" ? Commonsense forbids us to identify them with any kingdoms of the Amtiyoka-group to which Asoka applies that designation. And Rock Edict II does not contain any word violating commonsense. For, it tells us only of Amtiyoka and his "neighbours". We can easily think of the neighbouring rajas as lying on either hand of Amtiyoka, with frontiers marching like his with Asoka's own or else as rulers of a compact stretch of dominions at least close if not contiguous to those of Asoka and forming with Amtiyoka's territory added to theirs a fivefold block of frontier sovereignty. A "beyond" to Amtiyoka ending nearly 3000 miles off from Asoka's borders can be ruled out.

The ruling out of a vast distance would bring good sense also into a possible interpretation which is supported by Barua.[2] Barua speaks of five neighbouring territories in the west, as well as five in the south, within an extension of 600 yojanas. As the yojanas are mentioned at the very start, after the reference to "bordering dominions", one may understand them as applying to all the "frontagers" listed, those in the south no less than those supposed to be in the west. But how by extending "as far as the Tamraparni" could the *dharmavijaya* in the south cover 600 yojanas ? Even if we regard Tamraparni as meaning Ceylon and not merely a tract in the southernmost part of India itself, we do not go nearly 3000 miles from Asoka's southern border as we do from his western border if we identify the Yona kings with Alexander's successors. Barua seems not to have attended to this problem. But, as his interpretation of that opening phrase is worth considering, the curtailment we propose of the distance involved becomes all the more desirable.

The curtailment is desirable too in view of the phrase "bordering dominions" in Rock Edict XIII itself, corresponding to "frontier sovereigns" of Rock Edict II. So a new interpretation of what follows this phrase seems really

[1] Bhandarkar, *Asoka*, p. 229.

[2] Barua, *Asoka*, p. 131.

demanded.[1] It would suffice if "beyond" did not imply an extension up to 600 yojanas from Asoka's kingdom. In itself it is an innocuous word. But it is possible to draw from even the phrase translated as "and beyond this Amtiyoka" another sense. The phrase is : "paramcha tena Amtiyokena".[2] In both Prakrit and Sanskrit, "param"—meaning "further"—can stand for "also" or "in addition" no less than for "beyond", especially when accompanied by "cha" ("and") which induces the suggestion of something more than what has previously been mentioned. So we may with perfect legitimacy render : "and also with this Amtiyoka". Such a rendering would carry this edict nearer to being consistent with the other as well as with itself.

Now for the 600 yojanas. The whole phrase is : "Hida cha savreshu cha amteshu ashashu pi yojanasateshu yatra...."[3] The third, fourth and fifth words which Bhandarkar renders "And in the bordering dominions" are rendered by J. Bloch : "And on all the borders".[4] Both imply the same thing—namely, regions outside Asoka's empire proper but adjacent to it and touching his frontiers, the regions of his "frontagers". "On all the borders", however, is less committal and allows greater freedom of interpreting the succeeding words. It is also the more literal translation : the absolutely literal would be—"at all the ends (or extremeties)". Now, in connection with ends or extremeties, with the outermost fringes, it is natural to think of a phrase like "ashta dik" which means "eight directions", for in India we have eight points along an enclosing border : north, north-west, west, south-west, south, south-east, east, north-east. So, when the word "ashashu" follows immediately after "savreshu cha amteshu", the equivalent "ashtasu" ("eight") may spring at once to mind, particularly as "amteshu" ("borders" or "frontiers") is qualified by "savreshu" ("all") and both are preceded by the expression "hida cha"("and here") which makes a contrast and completes the scheme, familiar to Indian geographers and astronomers, of nine divisions, *nava-bheda*[5], of any region : one in the middle and eight around, one central and eight peripheral. Then, as a further indication of the lie of the bordering lands, the next phrase "pi yojanasateshu" would connote : "even for hundreds of yojanas" or "even for a hundred

[1] The new interpretation attempted here as well as *infra* owes much to the help of Dr. M. Venkataraman of Madras University.

[2] *The Inscriptions of Asoka*, edited by D.R. Bhandarkar and S. Mazumdar, p. 53.

[3] Ibid.,

[4] *Les Inscriptions d'Asoka*, p. 125, quoted in translation in A.L. Basham's *The Wonder that was India*, p. 54.

[5] Markandeya Purana, 57; Bhaskara, *Siddhānta Siromani*, III, 41; Varahamihira, *Brihat Samhitā*, p. 32 (Kern's edition). Varahamihira is supposed to have adopted the still earlier tradition recorded by Parasara in *Parāsaratantra*.

yojanas". This connotation is faithful to the original which has no necessary implication of "as far as..." in the sense of extension straight away from the borders but stands simply for an area covering, in any direction or else in a sum of distances in many directions, a hundred or several hundred yojanas.

In connection with the phrase "on all the eight borders" we may draw passing attention to certain details of the famous Sarnath Pillar which is an Asokan monument. It has on its top a quadripartite of semi-lions (which originally were upholding a Dharma-chakra), and they are standing (to quote R. K. Mookerji's words[1]) "on a drum showing figures of four animals carved on it, viz., a lion, an elephant, a bull and a horse placed between four wheels." Mookerji adds in a footnote : "The reason for Asoka's selection of these animals might perhaps be that they are traditionally associated with the four quarters as their guardians, viz., the elephant with the east, the horse with the south, the bull with the west, and the lion with the north. These four animals on the Sarnath column are thus intended to show that the Dharma was proclaimed to all the four quarters." Mookerji has recently dwelt[2] on a purely Buddhist symbolism in these animals—the elephant typifying the conception of Buddha, the bull the nativity, the horse the renunciation and the lion the fullness of spiritual power. And the wheel which is four times between animal and animal he has interpreted as a stage in Buddha's life between the renunciation and the final plenary fulfilment, and he has made it represent the first preaching of the Dharma by Buddha at Sarnath. But this is an artificial interpretation. Why should one of the stages occur four times in the scheme ? The wheel should stand for only the Dharma and not its preaching. And, if we are bent on a purely Buddhist symbolism everywhere, its presence four times should be taken as a sign that all the four animals have to be understood Buddhistically, being connected with the Dharma-chakra. But let us not forget the other symbolism, that of the four quarters. Asoka aimed at fusing the imperial with the religious, his ideal was to be a Chakravarti Dharmika Dharmaraja, a universal monarch whose very rule was religion, The Chakra is for him at once Dharma and Dominion, a spiritual and a secular emblem. This fact should make us see the placing of each of the four wheels between an animal and an animal as forming, together with the Dharma-implication, a common directional factor, so that the set of eight constituted by the wheels and the animals may suggest dominion in a detailed totality by representing not only the four quarters but also, as it were, the south-east, south-west, north-west, north-east. Nor is this all. The semi-lions of the top are generally understood to represent

[1] *Asoka*, p. 91

[2] Article in *Bhavan's Journal*, Sept. 23, 1956, p. 28.

royalty. Whenever an elephant or bull or lion or horse stands by itself, the king is symbolised in one attitude or another. To quote N. R. Ray,[1] an expert on Mauryan sculpture : "The Dhauli elephant symbolises His imperial Majesty King Asoka presenting himself in quiet dignity before the people of .Kalinga, while the Sarnath quadripartite is an exhibition of imperial pomp, power and authority." We have thus nine items in all, and the top joint animals upholding the now absent wheel may be taken to figure the central royal *bheda* with a fourfold circular front, while the eight carvings on the abacus below may be regarded as suggestive of the *ashta dik*, the remainder of the *nava-bheda*. What may be read into Asoka's R. E. XIII seems not to be a significance alien to his mind elsewhere but a motif natural to it and accompanying the royal and religious motifs.

The naturalness of *ashta dik* in an Asokan context may be said to have been felt in part by Mookerji[2] himself, though not exactly here in the Sarnath Pillar and though his translation of that edict is the usual one; for, in annotating the Minor Rock Edict of Brahmagiri, he makes the following remark on the number 256 which occurs at the end of it: "It may be noted in passing that $256=16\times16$ or $4\times8\times8$. It may be an auspicious number, or may stand for 32 divisions of 8 quarters or for the number of districts in the particular administrative area."

We may conceive that for Asoka the naturalness of *ashta dik* would have for one of its springs his very Buddhism. The number eight is, in an important sense, at the core of the Buddhist teaching, since side by side with Nirvana what is of its essence is the Eightfold path. Even the chakras on the drum of the Sarnath Pillar are supposed to have twenty-four spokes in order to represent, as Mookerji[3] explains, the twenty-four tenets of Buddhism or three multiples of the *Ashtangikamarga*. Perhaps it is also the religious feeling of the importance of the number eight that is responsible for Asoka's decision, as declared in the Commemorative Pillar Edict at Rummindei, to think of the land produce or the revenue in terms of eight divisions and claim only one-eighth of it from his subjects in the district where Buddha had been born.

Another way of understanding the phrase "on all the eight borders" would be in relation to a certain feature, disclosed by the Separate Rock Edicts and the Minor Rock Edict, in Asoka's administration of his frontier provinces. Barua[4] writes : "The four outlying provinces were the North-Western (Uttarāpatha),

[1] In his article in *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 508.
[2] *Asoka*, p. 116, footnote.
[3] *Bhavan's Journal*, p. 29.
[4] *Asoka and His Inscriptions*, pp. 146-7.

the Western (Avantī), the Eastern (Kalinga), and the Southern (Mahisha-mandala). Clearly, in the case of the Eastern Province, we find that it had two administrative divisions, the major and the minor, each with its official headquarters, namely, Tosali and Samāpā (S.R.E.I., S.R.E.II). The Southern Province is also shown to have comprised two such administrative divisions, the major with Suvarnagiri and the minor with Rishila as their respective headquarters (M.R.E., Bra.). Though such a clear case cannot be made out for the other two provinces, from the setting of the edicts, it may not be difficult to guess that the North-Western Province, too, consisted of two such divisions, the major with Takshaśīla and the minor most probably with Pushkarāvatī as their respective headquarters, and that the Western Province was constituted of two divisions, the major with Ujjainī and the minor probably with Vidiśā as their respective headquarters." Thus we have altogether eight province-divisions at the frontiers, giving rise technically to eight borders, *amteshu ashashu*.

Whichever of the two possible meanings be chosen, resulting from disjoining "ashashu" and "yojanasateshu" and combining the former with "amteshu" the total translation accords more than the usual with the Ceylonese chronicles' information about Buddhist missionary activities in Asoka's day.[1] They speak of missions sent from Pataliputra in Magadha to only "adjacent countries", meaning evidently either provinces other than Magadha within the empire itself or territories on the frontiers. One of the fields of work is named "Yona country"; but there is no reference to any representatives of the Dhamma being sent so remotely out west as Syria, Egypt, Cyrene, Macedonia and Epirus. In all we have only "Himalaya country" (north and north-east of Magadha), "Kashmira and Gandhara" and "Yona country" (north-west) "Aparantaka" (west), "Maharashtra" and "Vanavasa" (south-west), "Mahisa-mandala" and "Lanka" (south), "Suvarnabhumi" (east and south-east). No doubt, Bhandarkar has indicated that the Ceylonese chronicles cannot be credited with strict accuracy in all details, especially details of the missionary personnel, yet it is highly improbable that if they knew of missions to any distant Greek states they would omit them. All the more have we to dismiss every thought of post-Alexandrine Syria and beyond when side by side with the Yona country we have its usual associate Gandhara mentioned and when, like that associate, it is called "adjacent". No wonder Barua, though of the common belief that Asoka was post-Alexandrine, makes yet no suggestion about Syria and beyond when putting Asoka's edicts into relation with the missions : "Thera Maha-rakkhita was sent to the Yonarattha or Yonaloka. In this region we have the Shahbazgarhi version."[2]

4 *Mahavamsa*, XII, 1f; *Dipavamsa*, VIII, 1f and XII, 16f; *Samanta-pāsādikā*. I, p. 63f.

5 *Asoka and His Inscriptions*, Part II, p.8.

However, while Antiochus and company are surely out of the picture, we cannot be certain that the *Mahāvamsa's* adjacent Yona country has no Greek colour about it. The Ceylonese chronicles were written several centuries after Christ and the Bactrian Greeks and the Indo-Greeks had already been called Yavanas and left their mark on Indian history. But these chronicles are also haunted by the earlier Indian tradition through the Pali Buddhist literature of India proper. The grouping of the Yona country with Gandhara as a field for Asoka's mission, so strongly reminiscent of the traditional Indian *locale* of the Yavanas who had nothing to do with the Greeks, is in tune with the references already made by us to the *Assālāyana Sutta*, the *Majjhima Nikāya* and the *Chullanidesa*. Though Grecian foreigners were in the near background of these chronicles, there were in the remote rear a people called Yavanas and a Yavana state before any Indo-Greeks, Bactrian Greeks or Macedonians or even Ionians were known, before the time of Buddha himself. Through this state which carries no Greek colour, post-Alexandrine or pre-Alexandrine, we sense in the Ceylonese chronicles some touch of the vision we have conjured up of Asoka's "Yonas and Kambojas". We feel there the ancestors of the Perso-Indian people along the north-western course of the Indus, who inhabited not only the lands enjoying semi-independence in Asoka's kingdom but also those under his five independent rajas, the latter lands being the former's continuation.

But how, we may be asked, could there be independent Yavana rajas so close to Gandhara and Kamboja when Asoka's empire is understood to have extended far beyond Kabul and Kandahar, included both Afghanistan and Baluchistan and had its farthest outpost at Herat ? This question is principally prompted by the idea that Asoka was the grandson of Sandrocottus to whom Seleucus Nicator had ceded Paropanisadae, Aria, Arachosia and even Gedrosia. As soon as we put by that idea, the entire aspect of the situation changes. We realise that even Kashmir which is to the east of the Indus is not known from Asoka's inscriptions to have been within his empire. If it were known, Raychaudhuri would not be driven to appeal for its inclusion exclusively to Hiuen Tsang's memoirs and Kalhana's *Rajatarangini*.[1] Nor would Barua be forced to

[1] *The Political History of Ancient India*, p. 209. Our historians hardly realise that the Asoka of Kalhana's *Rajatarangini* (I, 101-108) is a problem. No doubt, he embraced Buddhism, but what are we to make of Kalhana's explicit statement that this ruler whom he calls Dharmasoka belonged to the Gonanda dynasty and was the 48th king of Kashmir, had other predecessors and successors than had Asoka Maurya, and a personal career quite different from the latter's? He was a sort of poet and he lost his kingdom to the Mlechchhas and fled to a forest. He is said to have built the town of Srinagar and erected numerous viharas and stupas, but no inscriptions are attributed to him. Asoka Maurya never refers to Srinagar in his inscriptions and he speaks in them of only enlarging the stupa of Buddha Konagamana and later making a pilgrimage to this stupa (Barua, *Asoka and His Inscriptions*, pp. 7-8). Our historians ignore all the points

write somewhat ruefully : "So far as Asoka's records are concerned, the ruling races of Kaśmira may come in either as some of the semi-independent Himalayan tribes representing the Nābha-lines or as representing some of the unnamed Aparāntas connected with the Yonas, Kāmbojas and Gāndharas, and there is no other way."[1] As far as the inscriptions go, out of the various tribes placed on the north-west by Indian tradition we have, as Pandit Venkatachalam has stressed, only the Yonas, Kambojas and Gandharas : where are the Daradas, Sakas, Haras and others who lay beyond them?[2] How is it that if the regions where they dwelt were within Asoka's empire, he has stopped with those three tribes? If they had been mentioned, we might have had reason to think his empire ex-
tended up to Herat and covered the provinces ceded by Seleucus to Sandro-
cottus. The impression intended by Pandit Venkatachalam that it did not
extend so far is confirmed by the map of ancient India given by Mookerji in
Hindu Civilisation,[3] where we see the Darada, Saka and Tushara provinces
to the north of Kamboja and Gandhara, provinces that have no place in Asoka's
indications about his kingdom. We have already quoted Barua on "the four
outlying provinces" of Asoka's empire. The province along the Indus hardly
appears to extend over the lands obtained by Sandrocottus from Seleucus. Not
a single sign is there in his edicts of such extension. When in R. E. V (Girnar
version) he speaks of Pataliputra and the outlying towns of his empire and we
search his other edicts for mention of towns other than Pataliputra we discover
only Bodh-Gaya (R. E. VIII), Kosambi (Allahabad Pillar E.), Ujjeni, Takkha-
sila (Kalinga R.E.), Suvarnagiri, Isila (Minor R. E.) and Tosali and Samapa
in the province of Kalinga (K. R. E.) The towns of the farther trans-Indus
region seem to have no connection with Asoka. If we depend on the geography
implicit in the statements made by him, there can certainly have been
independent Yavana rajas close to Gandhara and Kamboja.

Hiuen Tsang's report about the stupas ascribed to Asoka in the territories
beyond the Indus is pretty poor testimony. A stupa can be built by any follower
of Buddhism and since we know Buddhism to have spread outside of Asoka's
empire both before and after Christ in northward and north-eastern directions,
right up to Central Asia and East China, there can be no certainty about the
builder of those stupas. Buddhist legend is likely to ascribe them to whoever

in which the two Asokas are completely at variance, and jump straight to an identification of
them. Hiuen Tsang and the Buddhist writers of India and Ceylon do not seem to have even
been aware of different histories and inextricably mix up the Gonanda with the Maurya.

[1] *Asoka and His Inscriptions*, pp. 105-6.

[2] *The Age of Buddha, Milinda and Amtiyoka*, p. 135.

[3] Facing p. 120.

in the neighbourhood was Buddhism's greatest patron. Besides, Hiuen Tsang's testimony here is in itself unreliable. Barua notes that he reports four stupas by Asoka near the chief town of each of the four divisions of Bengal. But not only is it doubtful from Asoka's own inscriptions that his empire extended beyond one of those towns, Tamralipti, to Bengal : there is also the fact that Fa-hien who stayed at Tamralipti for a long time several centuries before Hiuen Tsang has nothing to say about any monument of Asoka to be seen near it.[1] Again, Hiuen Tsang reports Asokan stupas in the territories of the Cholas and Pandyas in the south which lay, according to Rock Edicts II and XIII, outside Asoka's empire and where they could never have been built by him.[2] The right comment, therefore, for the whole testimony of Hiuen Tsang in this matter should be what Barua says apropos the Bengal stupas : "in the absence of any inscription of Asoka throwing light on the point the evidences cited and relied upon must be treated all as presumptive in nature and inconclusive in effect."[3] And Barua who admits Hiuen Tsang to be here not particularly reliable inclines to believe his account of stupas in Aria, Arachosia, Paropanisadae and Gedrosia because he never suspects that Sandrocottus may not be Chandragupta Maurya. Asoka's own records cannot be said to confirm the account.

Indeed an inscription in Aramaic characters near Jalalabad in Eastern Afghanistan has been claimed to be his, but one may doubt whether it can serve as an actual argument. Mookerji mentions it, yet does not list it among the principal inscriptions.[4] Not even the other Aramaic inscription which has been attributed to Asoka finds a place among them, although its find-spot is Taxila which certainly was within Asoka's empire.[5] About it Barua writes : "The right half of an Aramaic inscription, which is discovered at Taxila and believed to have been a record of the time of Asoka and something concerning him (Herzfeld, *Epigraphia Indica*, XIX, p. 251), still awaits satisfactory dicipherment and convincing interpretation."[6] Perhaps the one near Jalalabad is equally indecisive. But, even if we take it to be Asoka's, what is the upshot ? Except for its solitary presence, the provinces ceded by Seleucus to Sandrocottus are empty of Asokan edicts, and this inscription itself goes only a little more than half way to Kabul from Taxila. A small jut of the empire beyond its north-western province whose capital was Taxila seems evinced by it. But it is a far cry still to Kabul, Kandahar and Herat—especially Herat at which

[1] *Asoka and His Inscriptions*, pp. 65-6.
[2] *Ibid*, p. 106.
[3] *Ibid*, p. 65.
[4] *The Age of Imperial Unity*, pp. 77, 71-2.
[5] *Ibid.*
[6] *Asoka and His Inscriptions*, p. 1.

Antiochus's kingdom halted and which in relation to Taxila is nearly four times the distance from Taxila to Jalalabad. So here also we have next to nothing against the probability of independent Yavana rajas between India and Persia.

Perhaps these rajas ruled over the five small states to whose mention in Kalhana's *Rajatarangini* Pandit Venkatachalam has drawn attention, states known as Yavana territory in Kalhana's time, 1148 A.D. : Abhisara (including Darva), Uraga (or Urasa), Simhapura (or Singapura), Divyakataka and Uttarajyotisha.[1] Kalhana narrates that several times in the past they revolted against their Kashmiri overlords and the latter had to conquer and annex them. "These five kingdoms", Pandit Venkatachalam informs us, "cover modern Afghanistan, the western part of Kashmir and the north-western part of the present North-West Frontier Province."[2] The biggest was Simhapura which lay to the west of Gandhara and included the region where stood the Greek historians' city of Nysa and Mount Meros. It formed the centre of the group, with a pair to the north-east on one side and a pair to the south-west on the other. It could very well have been the territory of the Yona raja Amtiyoka with neighbour kings on either flank. But we cannot be sure who are meant by Kalhana's Yavanas, for the term Yavana designating foreigners must have been applied to many peoples after the Bactrian Greeks, or perhaps it was mainly applied before Kalhana's day to a mixed race of Indo-Greeks and the natives of what is today Afghanistan. One point in favour of Pandit Venkatachalam's suggestion is that, no matter if the race in those kingdoms was not the original Yavanas, the domain occupied by it might have been the one in which the original Yavanas had their habitat and which because of that fact caused the term Yavana to be used for its later inhabitants. At least we do find Abhisara, Uraga and Simhapura among the northern kingdoms in the Mahabharata;[3] the first and third occur also among those conquered by Arjuna, while Uttarajyotisha and Divyakataka figure among those conquered by Nakula in the same poem,[4] and it is interesting to mark that among Arjuna's conquests Abhisara and Simhapura are mentioned immediately before and after Gandhara and that though Gandhara and Kamboja, the usual companions of Yavana in the Mahabhrata, are named and all the other names like Darada, Kashmira, Turushka represent races as well as places we do not find Yavana at all, as if the particular names of the Yavanas' kingdoms were doing duty for the general race-and-place appellation. Another point favourable to the suggestion is that in Kalhana we have not only these five kingdoms but also

[1] *The Chronology of Kashmir History Reconstructed*, p. 233.
[2] *The Plot in Indian Chronology*, p. 130.
[3] II, 27-28, 32.
[4] *Sabha Parva*, Ch. 32.

a sixth called Yavana Rashtra[1] which could very well have been the state of the Yavanas included with those of the Kambojas and Gandharas in Asoka's empire. Thus we have exactly the number of states we require.

Some of these states are mentioned too in the Greek history of Alexander's campaign. We repeatedly find a king called Abisares[2] evidently after the name of his state. There is also the state of Arsakes which has been identified as Urasa (more accurately, Uraga), modern Hazara.[3]

The question, however, about the five kingdoms is a little complicated by the seldom noticed fact of Asoka's mentioning only one single Yona raja : Amtiyoka. The rest of the rajas are listed without the epithet Yona. We take it for granted that they were Yona too. If Asoka intended them to be considered Yona, why did he not say so? It would have been the easiest thing to say: "the four Yona rajas...." Against this view we may argue that since Amtiyoka is called Yona the rest of his neighbours should be assumed to be Yona unless otherwise described. There is a point here, but certainly not definitive.

Rajendralala Mitra, while accepting Asoka's kings to be Antiochus and company, remarked long ago that, if Yona were synonymous with Greek, Asoka would not have designated Amtioyka alone as Yona raja : this solitary designation proved, in Mitra's eyes, that Antiochus was chosen for that title because none save he was a raja over Yona territory and that this territory comprised in its portion outside Asoka's empire Western Asia east of Herat and inclusive of Syria.[4] If we accept the post-Alexandrine Greek kings as Asoka's contemporaries, Mitra's case cannot be refuted with ease, especially as we know the term Yona to have been frequently used as a place-name and the Yonas as a people to have been located in Asoka's time to India's west-north-west. To reserve the term for the Greeks up to the second century A.D., as our historians urge, seems in any circumstance an error.

But, of course, for those who do not share Mitra's belief in Asoka's contemporaneity with Antiochus and his fellow-kings the question does not occur of differentiating the territorial from the racial in "Yavana". And it is a minor issue whether or not Amtiyoka is the sole Yavana raja. If the other rajas are non-Yavana they must be of this or that people residing in what ancient Indian writings as well as several inscriptions, referring to the north-west in a broad sense, have called Uttarapatha : Daradas, Sakas, Haras, Tusharas, Pahlavas, Paradas, Bahlikas. It does not matter what they are so long as they are between Persia and India and bear as they needs must, a Perso-Indian stamp. But per-

1 *The Chronology of Kashmir History Reconstructed*, p. 239.

2 Arrian, *The Anabasis of Alexander*, IV, 7.

3 *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 50.

4 *Indo-Aryans*, Vol. II, pp. 200-201.

haps the onus of proof lies on whoever would deny that the four rajas whose tribe is undesignated are Yavana like the first.

We may now aver that every point which, in connection with Yona or Yavana, may be deemed suggestive of Greek monarchs living in the middle of the third century B.C. has been squarely confronted and countered. So far, in the matter of the five Asokan king-names, strength has flowed from all quarters to support our finding "Antiochus" indecisive, "Magas" unnecessary, "Alexander" unlikely, "Antigonus" inaccurate and "Ptolemy" impossible. Against the impossibility of "Ptolemy" no corresponding certainty for any of the other four appellations can be pitted, nothing so definite as to exclude an alternative : hence this impossibility becomes crucial in the controversy.

Nevertheless we may admit that "Antiochus", though indecisive, and "Magas", though unnecessary, are very close to "Amtiyoka" and "Maga". At least "Amtiyoka" is closer to "Antiochus" than the form "Anantakaya" which we find in the Pali texts as the name of a Greek courtier of Menander's and which is considered the Indian version of the name Antiochus[1]. We need not be surprised at scholars getting impressed by Asoka's use of two names that seem to answer pretty naturally to those of a pair of Macedonian kings who were Alexander the Great's successors. But several Indian or Perso-Indian names can accidently echo Greek ones. We have dwelt sufficiently on such counterparts to Magas : we may mention a few more. The name Puloma which the Matsya Purana twice mentions in its list of the Andhra kings[2] corresponds closely to Polemo, the name of a Greek writer on India subsequent to Megasthenes[3]. Then there is Devamitra, the name of a king of Ayodhya[4], which looks like the Sanskrit for Demetrius. What is notable in the Asokan context is not so much the mere resemblance as the doubling of it. But let us not make a unique case out of the resemblance. If it were shown to be not unique it would not carry even the influence it does despite our demonstrating the impossibility of "Ptolemy" and the true sense of "Yavana". Perhaps a still greater resemblance occurs in another historical instance. The sacred book of the Parsis, the *Avesta*, tells us that the prophet Zarathustra preached his religion of Ahura Mazda at the court of Vishtaspa. Now, the first time that the name of Zarathushtra's God is found in Persian inscriptions, though with a slight difference and as a single word "Auramazda", it is in the inscriptions of King Darius. So a connection between Zarathustra and Darius may pretty naturally be conjectured—and the conjecture draws extraordinary strength

[1] J. Allan, *The Cambridge Shorter History of India* (1943), p. 65.
[2] *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 706.
[3] McCrindle, *Ancient India as described by Megasthenes and Arrian*, p.8, footnote.
[4] *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 174.

from the fact that the father of Darius is known to have been Hystaspes. The Greek form "Hystaspes" is undeniably close to if not identical with the Avestaic "Vishtaspa". Impressed by this extreme closeness as well as by several other features of the whole case, scholars like Jackson, Hertel and Herzfeld have placed Zarathustra in the sixth century B.C. Parsi scholars, however, choose 2500 B.C. at the latest and some vote for an even earlier date, 5000 or 6000 B.C. The last figure is also the one favoured by Herodotus who lived in 450 B.C., less than a century after Zarathustra if Jackson, Hertel and Herzfeld are to be believed. In reference to Zarathustra all other Greek writers between the fifth and the second centuries before Christ—Xanthus, Aristotle, Eudoxus, Hermodorus and Hermipas—support Herodotus. Among the moderns, Haug, Geiger, Andreas, Meyer, Clemen, Keith, Soderblom, Charpentier, Geldner, Bartholmae, Mills and Moulton constitute a third school which agrees with the Parsi scholars in rejecting the equivalence seen between Vishtaspa and Hystaspes but judges Zarathustra to have been not later than 1000 B.C. or earlier than 1400 B.C. We are not at the moment called upon to sit in judgment on all the opinions. What we are concerned to point out is that for various reasons two most impressive correspondences are thought fit to be set aside by a majority of scholars.

And most of the European ones among them may be surmised to accept the identification of Amtiyoka with Antiochus and of Maga with Magas. Indians scholars too who accept that identification are found disagreeing with Jackson, Hertel and Herzfeld. Thus Dr. B.K. Ghosh, in his article on Indo-Iranian Relations in *The Vedic Age* (p. 224), writes : "The mention by Assurbanipal about 700 B.C. of Assara Mazas along with seven good angels and seven bad spirits is a clear indiction of acquaintance with the reformed Zarathustrian pantheon. It is therefore impossible to suggest that the Kavi *Viśtāspa* mentioned in the Avesta as the patron of the prophet was no other than the father of Darius I (522-486 B.C.)..." Hence we also need make no bones about discregarding the apparent correspondence on our hands if weighty arguments exist to render it accidental.

Such arguments certainly exist and, added to the massed evidence about the non-Greek character of the Yavanas who figure among the Kambojas and Gandharas, they complete the crumbling of the rock of testimony that Asoka's edicts are thought to set against the Puranas.

What now remains to be done in the context of Asoka is to clear the way of every other consideration that may induce us to revise our disposition to favour the Puranic suggestion that Sandrocottus was not Chandragupta Maurya.

(To be continued)

K. D. SETHNA

Students' Section

SPIRITUAL GREATNESS AND THE SUPRAMENTAL YOGA

Q : People say that there are many similitudes between our Yoga and X' s. Are they right? I would also like to know if there is really something great in X.

Sri Aurobindo : Of course there is. But I know nothing about the similitudes. So far as I know he does not believe in the ascent and descent. (16-3-1936)

Q : There must be several great Yogis in India who are open to the Divine. If the Divine manifested in a human form in their own country, would they not know it ?

Sri Aurobindo : There is no reason why they should. Each has approached the Divine in his own way. He may not recognise if the Divine manifests in another way or a new form. (19-3-1936)

Q : X dissuaded all his disciples from visions and voices and said that such things have nothing to do with the true realisation of the Self or with one's own goal. What is your opinion ?

Sri Aurobindo : X is very much of a Vedantist. He does not believe in what we believe or in the descent etc. At the same time he himself had experiences in which the Mother interfered in a visible free material form and prevented him from doing what he intended to do. (7-7-1936)

He discouraged his disciples because his aim was the realisation of the inner Self and intuition—in other words the fullness of the spiritual Mind —visions and voices belong to the inner occult sense, therefore he did not want them to lay stress on it. I also discourage some from having any dealing with visions and voices because I see that they are being misled or in danger of being misled by false visions and false voices. That does not mean that visions and voices have no value. (9-7-1936)

Q : You have called X a great man and once you said that he lives always in the light. So he must be in the truth-consciousness. How then could he be mistaken in discouraging his disciples' occult faculties even when they were not misusing them but were making spiritual progress through them ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Because he is a great man does it follow that everything he thinks or says is right ? or because he lives in the light does it follow that his light is absolute and complete ? The "Truth-Consciousness" is a phrase I use for the Supermind. X is not in the Supermind. He may be and is in a true Consciousness, but that is a different matter. (9-7-1936)

Q : If X lives in the true consciousness, has he not always the full knowledge ? Is he not using the intuitive mind ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Living in the true consciousness is living in a consciousness in which one is spiritually in union with the Divine in one way or another. But it does not follow that so living one will have the complete, exact and infallible truth about all ideas, all things and all persons. X realises the Divine in a certain aspect and he has the knowledge of what is necessary for his path. It does not follow that he will have other knowledge that [is] beyond what he has reached or is outside it.

Intuition proper is true in itself (when not interpreted or altered by mind) although fragmentary—intuitive mind is mixed with mind and therefore not infallible ; because the truth intuition gives may be mixed or imperfectly formed by mind. (12-7-1936)

Q : Is not the inner Self everywhere ? Why do we speak of descent and manifestation ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Perhaps you are of the opinion of X, "The Divine is here, how can he descend from anywhere ?" The Divine may be here, but if he has covered here his Light with darkness of Ignorance and his Ananda with suffering, that, I should think, makes a big difference to the plane and, even if one enters into that sealed Light etc., it makes a difference to the consciousness but very little to the Energy at work in this plane which remains of a dark or mixed character.

(3-5-1937)

NAGIN DOSHI

POEMS

THE MANIFESTATION

FEBRUARY 29, 1956

O LIGHT Immaculate ! long-desired One !
With ruthful love Thou comest
To capture the world in a hushed tone !

Mighty Power of lightning steed !
Ere the mortal mind realised Thee
The hidden earth-spirit was freed !

Through thirty winter's blast and noise,
When our last ray was flickering
Two lonely Souls toiled in deep poise.

Eagle fire-winged ! One sweep on earth
By Thee broke age-old darknesses.
Our life's lost paradise took birth !

NAGIN DOSHI

THE SPHINX

SOUL's secrecy hewed out of stone !
The ages pass. The aeons moan...
Trance-held in titan womb of space,
Oh lofty queen of loneliness !

Vestured in silence' wizard walls
That never wake to earthly calls ;
Unchanged, immense, mysterious, dumb,
Oh Vigil of a world to come !

DHANANJAY

BALCONY DARSHAN

WHITHER goes the surging crowd ?
Young and old, weak and strong,
With faces beaming sunshine proud,
Pacing quick and racing throng !

From East, from West, from North, from South,
In modest attire yet colour-drest,
Assembled some with chanting mouth,
Others in solemn spirits abreast.

Up to the Balcony all eyes speed,
To catch first glimpse of the Mother Supreme,
Whose graceful look is the rightful meed
Of yearning souls with hopeful dream.

Darshan, glorious fetterless Darshan !
For poor and rich, for low and high !
—Rich Hegemony of Spiritual Life,
Raising all to transcendent Sky

Where no garish sun doth shine,
Nor moon, nor stars, nor lightning seen,
From where come Fire and Light ever fine,
Changing gloom to Immaculate Sheen !

C. N. VENKATARAMIAH

LYRICS FOR THE LITTLE ONES

At Thy Feet

Who can describe the blessedness
One feels when at Thy feet ?
For heaven itself is present there
Our heart's desire to meet.

A time by Fortune fixed arrives
For the yearning soul to find
Itself prostrate before their grace
With body, heart and mind.

'Tis then that love its freedom finds
And gushes out in streams
To kiss the beauty of Thy feet,
The idol of our dreams.

All sorrows cease there instantly,
All stains there disappear,
All glooms to morning glory change ;
For light divine is near.

The soul enjoys ambrosia there,
And raptures fill its trance
In which with God it whirls in rounds
Of Vaikunth's wonder-dance.

Thy Grace

I ask not anything of Thee
Save Thy maternal grace,
A constant vision of Thy smile
That moons Thy goddess-face.

It is the end of vile desires
That stain and wound the soul,
And raise a mammoth mountain-bar
Between us and our goal.

All moonlights from Thy smile emerge
To soothe and clear our gloom,
And make our being's lilies bright
With purity's perfect bloom.

A magic net of twinkling lights
Around Thy smile is spread ;
And caught therein our dreaming soul
Is in ecstasy's cradle laid.

All that is true and good and great
Thy grace on us bestows ;
And blessed with it our soul becomes
Free from its ancient woes.

The Blessing

Thy very presence on this earth
Is a blessing to all creatures,
A bright redeeming hope to all
Our erring fallen natures.

Thy sun awakes the spring in us
Of everlasting life;
Thy love, panacea for all ills,
Weans hearts away from strife.

Thy soothing smile attracts all souls
From dark abysses deep,
And bathes them in its moon-white peace
On snow-white summits steep.

Thy glance is a shining shaft of light
From suns beyond our ken;
It cleaves through the solid heart of night,
And slays the Beast in his den.

Thy touch is the touch of ecstasy
Of Ganga's dancing waves;
It drives away the hordes of sin
And gives us strength that saves.

Thy feet are the divine abode
Of bliss one never knew,
The birth-right of Thy blessed brood
To their heritage always true.

PUJALAL

THE PURANAS

Their Place in the Hindu Scriptures and Their Historical Value

It is the traditional belief of the Hindus that the Srutis, Smritis, Puranas and Tantras which are to them four kinds of scriptures are brought forth consecutively in the four ages, the Satya, Treta, Dwapara and Kali yugas, as authority for spiritual guidance. The Srutis are in the first age revelations of the Truth and its phenomena to the soul of the Rishi; the Smritis are inspirations of the same during the second age to the mind of the Thinker; the Puranas are assimilations of the same during the third age in the heart of the aspirant; the Tantras are realisations of the same during the fourth age in the sensuous mind of the Seeker. Thus the spiritual Truth, by descending into the various parts of the human being, completes its cycle of manifestation of a certain grade of Divinity. And a new cycle has to begin from the end of that cycle with a higher grade of Divinity for manifestation.

The Hindu scriptures proclaim and modern science asserts that earth-existence had a beginning and has an end in time, and earth-life is an evolutionary process, and man himself has evolved from animal and plant and inorganic matter. While modern science stops at that, the Hindu scriptures declare that the so-called beginning and ending are not final and that there is a never-ending series of Kalpas,—that is, of Cosmic cycles of manifestation and unmanifestation taking place by a divine act of self-creation. Then again they say that the evolutionary progress does not stop with mental manhood but proceeds to spiritual manhood. The theory of evolution of life on earth, according to the Hindu scriptures, is that evolution proceeds through Sarga, that is, primary creation by Spirit or Brahma, and then through Pratisarga, that is secondary creation by means of mental demi-gods who are emanations from Spirit and all this in three series of cycles; of the first series of it, the Kalpa, we have already spoken. It is said that the duration of this Kalpa, that is of the earth coming into existence and up to its dissolution is 432 crores of years, and then its period of unmanifestation equals this; it is also said that about 200 crores of years have elapsed since the earth came into existence. Science also says it may be approximately so. The second series of cycles is Manvantaras or Aeonic cycles; they are fourteen in number and the duration of each is arrived at by dividing the period of earth-existence by fourteen;

it comes to about 30 crores each. At the end of each Manvantara there is a dissolution of the old order and then a new order is established at the beginning of the succeeding Manvantara. The mental demi-god that presides over the mental life of each Manvantara is called Manu. During each Manvantara, in the act of creation and manifestation, each Manu is helped by several classes of beings, the chief of whom are the Rishis and Celestials. Of these, the Rishis take physical birth on earth at the beginning of each Manvantara in the Puranic view, produce living beings according to the needs of the process of evolution; the Celestials help mostly from the other worlds. Each Manvantara has its own Manu, its different set of Rishis and its different set of Celestials. The third series of cycles is that of Yuga Chakras, that is cycles of four ages—Satya, Treta, Dwapara and Kali yugas. The whole of earth-existence comprises a thousand cycles of these four ages, called Maha Yugas and thus each Manvantara would consist of about 71 and odd Maha yugas. At the end of each of these cycles there is a dissolution of the old order and a new order begins with the beginning of the new cycle. The duration of each cycle comes to about 43 lacs of years; the four ages in each are said to be in the proportion of 4:3:2:1. According to the Puranas, we are now in the 7th aeonic cycle under the reign of Vaivaswat Manu and in the 28th Maha Yuga. Of this Maha Yuga the first 3 ages Satya, Treta, Dwapara and 5000 years or so of Kali yuga have elapsed.

The Puranas have their own cosmography of seven principles of cosmic existence Matter, Life, Mind, Mahas, Ananda, Chit and Sat; each of these principles has its own planes of consciousness, its own worlds of existence, its degrees of power and its grades of substance; this idea has not been developed in the Puranas in such detail as Sri Aurobindo has developed in his writings. Our physical earth which forms part of the physical universe has also its subtle earths, apart from this gross formation; a geography of all these earths which appears fantastic with its seven concentric islands and its seven concentric oceans is separately given. All these islands except the Jambu Dweepa are only a symbolic representation of the subtle earths in the macrocosm as well as in man the microcosm; the idea of ocean both in the Puranas and the Veda is only an image of infinite existence of any particular principle or sub-principle. This in brief is the summary of the ideas of Primary Creation. Secondary Creation, Dissolution, Cosmic Cycles, Aeonic Cycles, cycles of the Four Ages, Manus, Rishis and Celestials contained in the Puranas.

Modern thought has advanced a theory of cycles of human civilisation and if it has not gone so far as to conceive of the Puranic cycles, it may do so at some time in the future and then the truth of the Puranic cycles may be accepted as it is or with some modifications. However, the evolutionary

epochs worked out by Nature in the elements of the physical earth and their constitution to prepare for the plant growth to begin in it may have been of longer duration than the evolutionary epochs in plant life which prepare in turn for animal life to begin on earth; similarly the evolutionary epochs of plant life may have been longer than those of animal life and they in turn longer than those of human life. The evolutionary epochs of human life itself may have had grades in the figures of vital consciousness, of mental consciousness and of spiritual consciousness in it all with their different cycles of progress from grade to grade. As all the Sciences advance and knowledge increases, the truth of manifestation through cycles which always repeat themselves in a spiral of ascension may become more and more evident. All that the Puranas have said about these three series of cycles may be true in some sense, the exactness of which we do not know at present, and they may not perhaps correspond with the actual evolution of Matter, Life and Mind on earth. But the theory seems to be sound and it was intended by its authors during those ages to train the physical mind of the common man for a spiritual approach towards life and existence.

Now when the Puranas say that the first Manu, Swayambhu, came into existence with a certain number of Rishis and Celestials and that then, helping one another in the act of creation, they produced a whole progeny of living beings, they need not be taken literally ; it may be that all these living beings came into existence not on the gross physical earth which was uninhabitable on account of its heat, but on some subtle earth as the special geography proves. As regards the true nature of Manu, Sri Aurobindo says, "If we examine the profound legendary tradition of India, we see that its idea of Manu is more a symbol than anything else. His name means man the mental being. He is the divine legislator, the mental demi-god in humanity who fixes the lines upon which the race or people has to govern its evolution. In the *Purana* he or his sons are said to reign in subtle earths or worlds or, as we may say, they reign in the larger mentality which to us is subconscient and from there have power to determine the lines of development of the conscious life of man. His law is *manava-dharma-shastra*, the science of the law of conduct of the mental or human being and in this sense we may think of the law of any human society as being the conscious evolution of the type and lines which its Manu has fixed for it. If there comes an embodied Manu, a living Moses or Mahomed, he is only the prophet or spokesman of the Divinity who is veiled in the fire and the cloud, Jehovah on Sinai, Allah speaking through his angels" (*The Ideal of Human Unity*, p. 188).

The confusion in understanding Hindu scriptures arises only when its meaning is taken literally either by the naturalistic interpreter or the ritualis-

tic interpreter, and not in its symbolic sense. The symbol of Manu, if properly understood, will clear most of the difficulties of both the groups of scholars. The idea of the cycles of human civilisation has not been developed in the Puranas, maybe because they proceeded on a different basis or could not see the details of the future, or it may have been neglected since it served no immediate purpose. But Sri Aurobindo has developed it in *The Human Cycle* and some others too have written History books based on this theory. So far as the history aspect of the Puranas is concerned, the whole difficulty in extricating this from them lay in understanding its theory of the cycle of the four ages, the real significance of the four scriptures in their relation to the four ages, the Vamsas, that is, genealogies of Kings and Rishis, Vamsanucharitam, that is the traditional history of the personages of these genealogies and the psychological as well as the chronological sequence of these all through the ages ; the nature of the difficulty about the idea of Manu has already been explained.

If we have to take the Vedas and their four hundred Rishis and perhaps an equally good number of Rishis or so of the Brahmanas, Aranyakas and Upanishads as representing the first age, a good many Acharyas of the Sutras, Darshanas and Smritis as representing the second age, a good many of the founders of the Puranic religion as representing the third age and a good many Siddhas in Tantra as representing the fourth age and if all these are considered as historical figures, and the facts physical, psychological and spiritual mentioned in them as historical, each age and scripture continuous and yet independent of the others, then nothing else than the theory of these four ages of the cycle with the four corresponding scriptures, with all the historical data provided by these scriptures through each age, gives us a harmonious and intelligible history from the beginning of the cycle to the end of it. Tradition asserts it, the records are there quite clear for everybody to see and understand. The ritualist takes everything literally and gives no value to the symbol and its resultant psychological and spiritual meaning. The naturalist rejects what he does not understand and takes only what he wants from a literal understanding and has for his Gurus Max Muller and Pargiter who accepted what they understood and rejected what they could not. Both groups think they are superior to all others, one in its devotion and the other in its intellect. If, however, the correct psychological sequence of all these ages and the historical data available in each separately by itself are recognised and appreciated the chronological sequence of them all will fall of itself in its correct place.

Since there are 28 yugachakras of the present aeonic cycle of Vaivaswat Manu that have almost elapsed and the Puranas in their description of the

Solar and Lunar dynasties indiscriminately deal with these yugachakras, it is rather difficult to mark the divisions in the lists of these dynasties and fix them up separately either in each of the 28 cycles or in the ages of any of these cycles. If ancient history is to be built out of the Puranas it is no use discarding their idea of cycles and bringing a personage from some previous cycle mentioned by them into the present. If we have to be honest in our dealings with them we have first to accept their statement of a thing as they make it and judge things on the basis of that statement, not say that the Puranic author has erred in making that statement. For instance, when it is said that Revati, the fifth or sixth descendant of a brother of Ikshwaku, the original ancestor of the Solar dynasty, went to Brahma with her father and returned after many ages, it cannot be said that, along with her, her ancestors belonged to any one age of this cycle. From the Puranic version, at the most it can be said that only she and her father belonged to some age of this cycle. But the modern historians say that all her ancestors also belong to one of the four ages of this cycle.

To build up a true history of ancient India of which the earliest period to us is the Vedic age, it is necessary to find a basis to fix the Vedic age of this cycle. This cannot be done from the Puranas. The only course for doing it is to depend on the historical data in the Vedic records themselves. The Rig Veda has mentioned the names of kings, Rishis and gods of earlier times also. This may form the pre-Vedic history if we like. But all the data of the Vedic period has to be found out first from the Vedas alone and not from other writings, for they are more reliable than others in even the history aspect. If the Puranas have to be relied on, it is only when they expressly or by sure implication say that a king belonged to a particular cycle and a particular age of that cycle.

Now in fixing the Vedic age of the present cycle the ritualistic group of historians say that it began 39 lacs of years ago and assert all that is said in the Puranas about it as literally true to the last letter. The naturalistic group of historians to which almost all the modern history scholars of Universities belong do not recognise either the aeonic cycles of the Puranas or its cycles of the four ages. They accept the Vedic age and not the cycle of the four ages in the proportion of 4 : 3 : 2: 1. If at all some of them accept the four ages, they arbitrarily fix 1000 or 1200 years for the first three and no duration for the fourth age. And then these writers have no opinion of their own about the dissolution of the old order at the end of a cycle and the establishment of a new order at the beginning of a new cycle or of some major change within the new order itself at the end of each passing age and at the beginning of a succeeding age in the cycle. It is only when a recognition and correct appreciation of all this is made that the theory of cyclic progression and psychological

progress within the cycle becomes acceptable. In this sense of the theory of the cycles, none of the modern historians of both the groups can be said to have accepted this theory. But in their attempt to know the truth of things they seem to be fumbling towards acceptance of it.

At present the ritualistic school does not command a large following. But the naturalistic has many noteworthies. Their main idea is: "Indian culture must be viewed not in sections but in continuous time and the long career of our culture can be divided into four distinct ages. The first, the Age of Expansion, can be traced from the civilisation of the Indus Valley, 5000 years ago, when the country worshipped the Pashupati in the Yoga posture, through the fresh young life during the age of Rigvedic *mantras* and the vigorous youth of the post-Vedic age of Janamejaya Parikshita; through the unbroken continuity during the age of Imperial Magadhas (c. 700 B.C.-A.D. 320), the Classical Age of the Guptas (A.D. 320-750), and the age of Imperial Kanouj (A.D. 750-1000)".[1]

From this we see that the first age of India is conceived to be from 3000 B.C. to 1000 A.D. The 2nd age for the naturalistic school is from 1000 A.D. to the end of the 17th century and the third age from then to August 15th of 1947, and from then begins the fourth age which is continuing now. Clearly this Indian History has nothing to do with the Puranic conception of the Cycle of the Four Ages, its Yugachakra or Mahayuga : nor has it anything to do with Sri Aurobindo's conception of the four ages of India's Cultural Cycle as we see it in his writings. In many respects the Puranas have not dealt with the subject of India's cultural cycle as we understand the word "Culture" in modern times. They had taken their culture to be spiritual and not mental, while we misunderstand mental culture to be spiritual. In the Puranas they have dealt only with the latest Aeonic cycle of our present Manu and not so much with the latest Mahayuga; they have nowhere given a chronological or psychological sequence of events of the present Mahayuga. Sri Aurobindo alone gives a psychological sequence of events of India's four ages of cultural cycle, that is, the cycle of India's culture or civilisation from the time of the Rigveda. Scholars may be advised to study his writings first and then the Hindu scriptures to find out for themselves the psychological sequence of events of the cycle in more detail for the purposes of history, and then from ascertained and ascertainable facts give a correct chronology to these events. In *Foundations of Indian Culture* he says that after the divine childhood of Satya yuga, the heroic youth of Treta yuga, the bright and strong early manhood of the people was over by Dwapara and there is instead a long and opulent maturity and richly

[1] *The Indian Inheritance*, Part II, p. 112.

coloured decline in Kali. The classical age of the ancient literature, which forms part of the Kali yuga, the best known and appraised of all, covers a period of some ten centuries and possibly more (it may be noted here that the naturalistic school gives the duration of the classical age to be 430 years) and it is marked off from the earlier writings by a considerable difference, not so much in substance, as in the moulding and colour of the thought, temperament and language. Then again Sri Aurobindo says that the decline of Kali is not to death, for it is followed by a certain rejuvenescence, a fresh start and a repeated beginning, of which the medium is no longer Sanskrit but the derived languages, the daughters of the dialects raised into literary instruments and developing, as the grand and ancient loses its last force and inspiring life. (p.332) From all this we may believe that the age of Kali entered with the passing away of Sri Krishna and that the four ages are in proportion of 4 : 3 : 2 : 1. Till facts are ascertained we may not fix the chronology of these ages. If Sri Krishna's passing away is the beginning of the Kali yuga and if at all the theory of the Four-Age cycle is true, we have to fix the date of the ending of the Kali yuga and the beginning of the next cycle of the four ages.

Sri Aurobindo does not touch on chronology and the proportion of the four ages of India's cultural cycle, but he definitely accepts the idea of the four ages Satya, Treta, Dwapara and Kali yugas with their corresponding scriptures which took their standard forms in the ages proper to each of them. In terms of the psychological development as described by Sri Aurobindo of these four ages, the first can be said to be the Age of Spiritual Perfection of Man, the second the Age of Spiritual Typal Perfection of Man, the third the Age of Spiritual Convention and the fourth the Age of Spiritual Decadence. The Indian renaissance began with Raja Rammohan Roy; the next cycle has to begin with the advent of Supermind. Thus while accepting the idea of the Puranic four ages without touching on the point of their durations, Sri Aurobindo gives a new shape and an intelligible meaning to the Hindu theory of the cycle with its four ages. The cycle of the four ages which started with the Rigvedic Rishis began with the advent of Intuition as the figure of godhead in man and the succeeding cycle will begin with the advent of Supermind as the figure of godhead in man. A history based on these correct ideas and the facts relating to them can surely be constructed with the help of the Hindu scriptures. From facts we can definitely assert that the last cycle ended between the 5th and the 9th December of 1950, that period at once dreadful and glorious, dreadful in the sense that Sri Aurobindo had deliberately to sacrifice his body, glorious in the sense that the sacrifice hastened the advent of the next cycle by the descent of the Supramental Truth. In such a case, from the passing away of Sri Krishna to the passing away of Sri Aurobindo

is the Kali age, the duration of which can be settled by the available data. This may form as the basis for determining the other ages, for which the scriptures are the only real source. All depends upon a proper interpretation of them.

We can make a brief statement about the psychological progress of man through the four ages, as understood from Sri Aurobindo's writings. The Rishis of the Vedic age by their spiritual culture and discipline attempted an integral spiritual perfection of man in the mass. But the mental evolution of the physical mind of man in the mass by the process of Nature had not made enough advance to make the Rishis' work possible, and since this mental evolution of man is the first preoccupation of Nature and also the intention of the Supreme Divine, the Vedic Rishis' effort failed. It gave place to the spirituo-intellectualised cultural movement of the Rishis of the Brahmana-Aranyaka-Upanishads at the end of the first age and maintained as such by Smritis during the second age. Sri Aurobindo definitely asserts that the culture of the age of the Divine Childhood of the Vedic Rishis completely collapsed and a new spiritual culture which knew nothing of either the faculties or the culture of the previous age was started by the later Rishis. At a time when there were no communications and people lived in a tribal condition of pastoral life with the patriarchs and their descendants as the heads or kings of these tribes and a small number of Rishis who in course of time developed to about 400, as the Rigveda shows, with nothing but their Words of Creative Power,—the Mantras at their disposal to bring down into earth-consciousness the spiritual power that moulded the life of man into a spiritualised society,—it is impossible to think that it would have lived its life and disappeared in 200 years, as our History scholars think, to give place to the immense effort of the later Rishis to be made altogether on a different basis of culture. The cultures of the four Vedas, Rik, Yajur, Sama and Atharva and then the Brahmanas, the Aranyakas and the Upanishads consecutively following one upon the other though overlapping each other could not have finished their course of life and development in a few millenniums, let alone five or six centuries. Hence to put all the ages together into a period of 1000 years seems to be ridiculous. One can definitely see by oneself the truth of this if one understands the psychological and spiritual interpretation of the Vedas. And, having understood it, if one undertakes the interpretation of other Vedic hymns which Sri Aurobindo has not translated, one can realise in one's own inner consciousness the immense change of mental process required in the building up of man, a change which would be impossible in a 1000 years or even 10,000 years for a whole society to adopt.

Then from the second age of its spiritual perfection of the type that was

generalised in a limited fold of Hindu society, it passed to the age of spiritual convention with the increase of its fold. What was already there in the Vedas and in the Vedic cult is changed to Puranic worship by the Puranic authors. Only the Vedic cult is transformed and broadened for an understanding of the mass but it has no new creation in it; that is why it is an age of spiritual convention.

Then from the third age of spiritual convention, the fourth age of spiritual decadence with the passing away of Sri Krishna enters. But the decadence, as already said, is not death, " for it is followed by a certain rejuvanescence, a fresh start and repeated beginning" made by great souls like Buddha, Shankara, Ramanuja and a score of others. Thus the decadence had already begun long before Buddha, and the life of Buddha is only one attempt at a rejuvanescence of spiritual life. Before and after Buddha the "fresh starts", as Sri Aurobindo puts it, have been there and we do not know of the earlier attempts because there is no historical record of them except the ill-understood Hindu scriptures. These attempts before and after Buddha produced no successful spiritual results of revival. With the beginning of the new cycle the flowering of spiritual culture has still to manifest and let us hope it will. Thus we see a world of difference in the outlooks and in the periods as are evidenced in the quotations from the naturalistic school and from Sri Aurobindo. While the former includes the age of Buddha and the earlier "fresh starts" in the first epoch or age, Sri Aurobindo definitely puts it in the Kali age.

Now before taking up for final consideration the genealogies of Kings and Rishis and the traditional history of important personages of these genealogies during the aeonic cycle of Vaivaswat and its Mahayugas, as the Puranas put it, we may require to understand more clearly the symbol of Manu as Sri Aurobindo has interpreted the word. Manu is only a symbolic being, representing a mental demi-god, who by himself or through his sons reigns over physical earth from some subtle earths or worlds. If we express the same thing in a more detailed language we should say that he reigns over humanity, either small groups or big groups or even the whole human race, through the larger mentality of that group, which means not merely the surface conscient but the subconscient of that group and from there has the power to determine the lines of development of the conscious life of that group of human society. Yet sometimes he can be born on earth as an embodied human being with a capacity to open himself to the power and consciousness of the subtle Manu, the mental demi-god, or his son, presiding over a particular group of human society or even of human race. Thus Manu, the author of *Manu Smriti*, if at all he lived, may be considered as the embodied Manu of the Hindus; Moses may be considered as the embodied Manu of the Jews on account of his capacity

to communicate with Jehovah on Sinai; Mohamed can be considered as the embodied Manu of the Moslems on account of his capacity to communicate with Allah through the angels of Allah. All these angels or mental demi-gods are differently called by different faiths but in fact they are all of the same category, perhaps, in the subtle earths or worlds. Extending this theory to other examples we may say that Manu may be born as an embodied being, not particularly with that name, in any human society at any time and because he has the capacity to determine the lines of development of the conscious life of that society he becomes the Manu, the originator of the Dharma-Sastra of that society. The spiritual leaders of India, knowing the evolutionary process of life on earth moving in cycles, have expressed the whole thing in a symbolic language.

Now with regard to the Puranic Manus we need not worry whether they were really embodied beings or not so long as the History scholars are decided to take his decendants, the Solar ones as well as the Lunar, as embodied human beings. These may represent the sons of Manu as having the power to determine the lines of development of the conscious life of Aryan society in the beginning of any one of the ages or cycles. The only difficulty comes in deciding the age or cycle in which these dynasties were born together or separately. For this have we to depend on the interpretations of the school of Max Muller and Pargiter or have we to depend on the language of the Puranas themselves and the symbolic meaning of these things by better authorities like Sri Aurobindo? This is the first question to be solved. It may be left to the history scholars and the organisers of history associations themselves. Meanwhile we can examine some writings of the Naturalistic school and see how far they stand to reason and to the scientific method of research and investigation into the Puranic life.

In determining the age of the Rig Veda, a complete or even a little incomplete similarity in the forms of names occuring in the Rigveda to those occuring in the Puranas as a proof of identity in persons is being adopted on the basis of the science of philology. For example, Kurusravana[1] is the name of a king which occurs in the Rigveda only once in R.V.10-33-4. as the son of Trasadasyu. Kuru is about the 35th descendant of Pururavas, the first king of the Lunar dynasty. The name of the father of Kuru is Samvarana. If the father's name has to be joined to Kuru to differentiate him from other Kurus, the first vowel in the word Samvarana will be lengthened according to the rules of Sanskrit grammar. Thus the words Kurusravana and Kurusamvarana look almost identical in their forms but not completely. This identity in their

[1] Dr. A.D.Pusalker's *Studies in Epics and Puranas of India*, Chapter IV.

forms has fascinated some scholars into thinking of their identity in persons and then the problem, both from the philological point of view and from facts gathered in the Puranas, Mahabharata and Rig Veda and some other Hindu scriptures, is solved with a final quotation from Pargiter.

To prove the philological basis for the change of Sravana to Samvarana, "the method of Anaptyxis" is called into service, by which Sravana might have become Saravana, and an authority is quoted for this; then it is said that this word by the method of Metathesis might have become Savarana and for this again an authority is cited; we are told that finally by the method of "Spontaneous Nasalisation in the Indo-Aryan languages", as explained by one Mr. G.A.Grierson, Savarana might have become Samvarana. So even from the point of view of the Science of Philology, Kurusravana the son of Trasadasyu in Rigveda is transformed to Kuru, the son of Samvarana in the Puranas.

Now "Anaptyxis" is a Greek word which means upholding and in phonetics it is said to express how the Indo-European languages, for ease of utterance or through influence of euphony, introduce a vowel between some consonants, as for instance the word "elm" in English has become "ellum" in vulgar English. The method of "Spontaneous Nasalisation in the Indo-Aryan Languages" perhaps applies not to Sanskrit but only to other Indian languages which adopted Sanskrit words by nasalising them and using them as words of their own. What shall we say of these methods? If any of the three applies to the Sanskrit language it would certainly find a place in either Vedic or Classical Sanskrit grammar. But there is no trace of them. So should not the rules of Sanskrit grammar be quoted with regard to changes in that language rather than rules of other languages to explain a change of word from one form to the other?

Then again the word Sravana is formed from the root Sru in which the letter s is palatal. Samvarana is formed from the prefix Sam added to the word Varana, which itself is formed from the root vr. In Samvarana the letter s is dental. As a parallel to the present example we can see no instance in the Sanskrit language, whether Vedic or classical, wherein the palatal s can become the dental s. So all the three methods of the "Pseudo-Science of Modern Philology" which belongs to the "Little Conjectural Sciences", as the great philologist Renan puts it, do not apply to the present case.

Above everything, we are being pointed to the two words Sravana and Samvarana as occuring in the Rigveda. But it is a commonplace of scholarship that either of them has its own separate definite meaning and that it is formed by a definite method of construction. The two words continue their individual separate existence side by side, as it were, throughout the history of Sanskrit language, with their different meanings. The Puranas are composed not in any

other language than Sanskrit, they are as much Sanskrit as the Vedas themselves. The two words are so common in Sanskrit that to think of one changing to the other by philological processes through ages or centuries, as claimed, is unthinkable except under an arbitrary compulsion to satisfy the fancy that the son of Trasadasyu in the Veda is the son of Samvarana in the Purana.

(To be continued)

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